"HEARTS OF BLACK," A STORY OF AARON BURR, WILL BEGIN SOON.

THE CHICAGO LEDGER

VOL. XXXII, NO. 34. CHICAGO, ILL., SATURDAY, AUGUST 20, 1904. SINGLE COPIES 5 CENTS.

QUEEN OF THE LOVE-RED ROSE

OR

MIGNON'S TRAGIC CAREER - - - - By Constance Beatrice Willard.

[Copyright by W. D. Boyce Co.]

CHAPTER I.

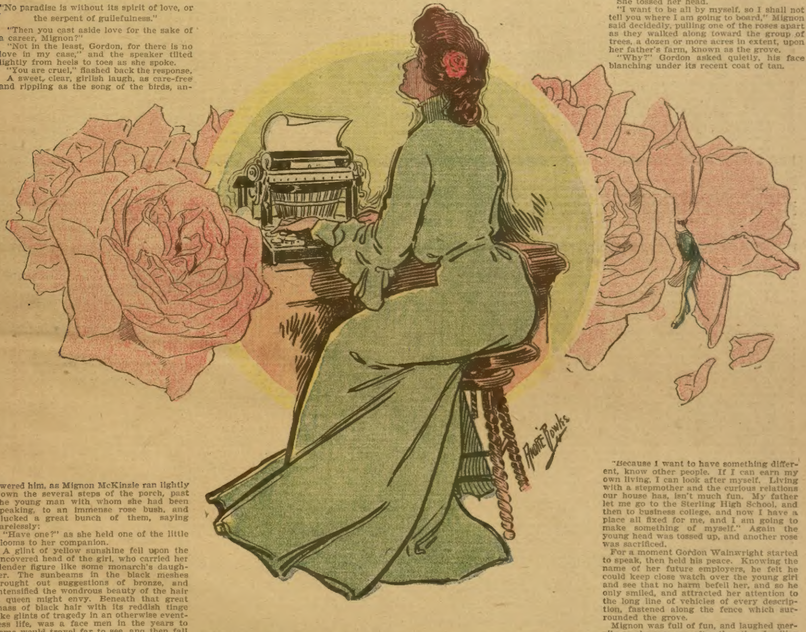
"No paradise is without its spirit of love, or the serpent of guilefulness."

"Then you cast aside love for the sake of a career, Mignon?"

"Not in the least, Gordon, for there is no love in my case," and the speaker tilted lightly from heels to toes as she spoke.

"You are cruel," flashed back the response.

A sweet, clear, girlish laugh, as care-free and rippling as the song of the birds, answered him, as Mignon McKinzie ran lightly down the several steps of the porch, past the young man with whom she had been speaking, to an immense rose bush, and plucked a great bunch of them, saying carelessly:



"Have one?" as she held one of the little blooms to her companion.

A glint of yellow sunshine fell upon the uncovered head of the girl, who carried her slender figure like some monarch's daughter. The sunbeams in the black meshes brought out suggestions of bronze, and intensified the wondrous beauty of the hair a queen might envy. Beneath that great mass of black hair with its reddish tinge like glints of tragedy in an otherwise eventless life, was a face men in the years to come would travel far to see, and then fall madly in love with its richness and charm. Picture a face, a perfect oval, with clear-cut profile, across which eyebrows had been drawn, firmly yet delicately, in one straight line, there being no division over the well-shaped nose, almost Grecian in its purity of outline; a chin which melted into a tiny, graceful neck, well set upon youthful shoulders upon which no burdens of life had yet been placed; and a mouth over which poets in future days were to rave and exhaust their words, only to begin once more. In the faultless curves of that delicately-moulded mouth lay the keynote of the girl's character. Her future weal or woe was encompassed in the lines formed by the bright crimson of her lips, for which many men were to stake their souls, for this girl has a history before her, and one which comes to but few. When Mignon McKinzie was only an infant of several years a great novelist saw the rosebud face, and, looking earnestly at it, said to his companion:

"There is a sad tragedy hidden in that little face."

Within the pages of this narrative will be disclosed what that tragedy was, and what was its ending.

This morning, the Fourth of July, 1895, however, she was simply a girl of sixteen, with the fresh bloom of youth on her cheeks and the radiance of hope in her clear eyes, dark as the midnight sky on a stormy night, but with nothing of the world's bitterness or sin written in them.

Fastening a cluster of the roses in the bosom of her simple white dress, made by her own little fingers, Mignon held one of the choicest, and as she did so a smile dimpled her lovely face. Her companion, Gordon Wainwright, gazed earnestly and tenderly upon the one girl he felt he could ever love, and as he saw her then, in her father's yard, untainted of the world, innocent and pure as the white roses in her childish hands, with the glorious sun shining down upon her, almost transfiguring her, he never saw her again.

Still smiling, she proffered the rose, and with a husky note in his voice he said:

"If you will pin it on," and when she complied the strong young fellow trembled, but never thought of profaning the dainty fingers by touching them, either with hands or lips. As she fixed it to her satisfaction, Mignon said laughingly:

"Gordon, old boy, say you forgive me, and then we will go over to the grove."

"Forgive you for what?" Gordon asked, his head whirling a little.

"Well, you know why?" a little wistfully.

"Oh, because you are bound to go to Chicago tomorrow?"

The dark head nodded vigorously.

"Certainly I do forgive you, but I sha'n't stop loving you, or give up my purpose to marry you. See here, Mignon, I have accomplished everything I started out to do thus far. When dad died four years ago, you know what I did. Sold off everything, put the money in the First National Bank in Sterling, and started out. In June I graduated from Yale. A week later I was back here. Then I saw my Mignon once more. All your pictures had not prepared me for what I saw that night my eyes first fell upon you over at the dance in the barn at Neinstadder's. I made up my mind then, and it's for life. Mignon, I'm going to marry you, and God nor devil shall not step between," and he raised his straw hat as he spoke.

"Why, Gordon, that's wicked," Mignon gasped.

"It is the truth. But come, now, dear, I will not say anything more. We will have a glorious winter in Chicago, for I am going to the city in August or September, and begin newspaper work."

Mignon pouted. "Have you a place?"

"No, but I'll get one. In the meanwhile, there is a little of the farm money left."

She tossed her head.

"I want to be all by myself, so I shall not tell you where I am going to board," Mignon said decidedly, pulling one of the roses apart as they walked along toward the group of trees, a dozen or more acres in extent, upon her father's farm, known as the grove.

"Why?" Gordon asked quietly, his face blanching under its recent coat of tan.

"Because I want to have something different, know other people. If I can earn my own living, I can look after myself. Living with a stepmother and the curious relations our house has, isn't much fun. My father let me go to the Sterling High School, and then to business college, and now I have a place all fixed for me, and I am going to make something of myself." Again the young head was tossed up, and another rose was sacrificed.

For a moment Gordon Wainwright started to speak, then held his peace. Knowing the name of her future employers, he felt he could keep close watch over the young girl and see that no harm befell her, and so he only smiled, and attracted her attention to the long line of vehicles of every description, fastened along the fence which surrounded the grove.

Mignon was full of fun, and laughed merrily as she saw one after the other familiar conveyance, which boasted some distinguishing mark. There was the piece of rope in the left rein in the harness belonging to close-fisted Miss Mary Julian, one of the richest women in the neighborhood. Gordon declared it was the same rope he had seen there before he left for college, and he was equally sure of the identity of the board seat behind the more pretentious one in the glaring red and green farm wagon of the Reddenhouses, whose family not only increased year by year, but sometimes two and three at once. Still there were dashing-looking top buggies, with which the young bloods of the neighborhood announced their appearance in the matrimonial market, in which the best girl was taken to ride; as well as other carriages, and from them were pouring a happy, cheerful-looking crowd. Fourth of July picnic was the one always to be attended.

As they neared the bars through which they were to pass into the grounds, Gordon paused. They were hidden behind a hedge of osage orange, entirely apart from the world, and he asked with a tremble in his voice:

"Mignon, dear, wait a minute."

"What is it?"

"You say you do not love me?"

"How can I? Why, I am not seventeen yet, and I know nothing of the world," she answered gently, for she realized that her words were causing him suffering.

"Then you love no one else?"

"Why, of course not, Gordon, honestly no one. I like you better than any one else in the world," and she held out her hands to him.

Taking the two little hands in his own, the young man looked down into the dark eyes, his honest, clear blue ones piercing their depths, and said earnestly:

"Mignon, somehow I feel as though after we go in these things will never be the same for us two. I love you with all my heart, and if a man's will can accomplish it, I am going to marry you some time. Tell me something—have any of these fellows about here ever kissed you?"

The lovely face flamed scarlet.

"Why, of course not."

"Not even in kissing games?"

"I never play kissing games."

The young man's face grew very tender, and placing his arm about her shoulders drew her nearer to him as he whispered:

"Because I love you, give that first kiss to me."

The girlish face was raised to his, and the lovelight in the one above her set the young heart to fluttering. Shyly she raised her mouth to his, and he bent tenderly and kissed her, but he whispered sadly to himself as they moved on toward the bars:

"Ah, Mignon, Mignon! that first kiss is not mine yet. I kissed you, but, my darling, you do not yet know the meaning of a kiss. God grant it may be I who teaches you," then he let down the bars for Mignon to trip through into what was to be the prologue to the tragedy of her young life.

All were congregating about the spot chosen for the dining place, for long experience had taught those in charge that little could be done until the contents of the many baskets had been disposed of, and a number of comfortable, ruddy-cheeked matrons, with handsome maidens, were already engaged in preparing the long-looked-for repast.

As soon as the two appeared they were greeted with shouts and some rather personal remarks, but as every young couple was treated in the same way, Mignon did not appear to care, although Gordon, who had been absent from the neighborhood long enough to forget much, felt his face glow angrily, and he gladly joined the crowd of young men who were to go for water, as with the thoughtlessness usually displayed upon such occasions the picnic grounds were over half a mile from any water, and all used by man or beast had to be carried from the barnyard of Reuben McKinzie.

As Gordon left her, Mignon was about to proffer her services to the female contingent when she heard some one say:

"Pardon me, but can you point out Mr. Reuben McKinzie?"

And, turning, Mignon saw before her one of the most handsome men she had ever seen. Before his charms Gordon's frank blue eyes and light hair, his broad, muscular figure and virile personality, faded into an indistinct image.

Freeman Lucian Chatterton was recognized as one of the handsomest and best-dressed men in Chicago, as well as one of the leading lights of the legal profession of Cook County, so no wonder the eyes of the little country girl were dazzled.

From the crown of his carefully-cut hair to the sole of his well-fitting shoes, which displayed a slight glimpse of exquisite silk hosiery, the man was perfectly dressed. His suit was but a light gray outing flannel, but the way it hung upon the slender figure was a revelation to Mignon. His straw hat was different, somehow, even from Gordon's, while his hands were much whiter than hers, and upon the little finger of his left hand gleamed a magnificent diamond. More than once her eyes were held by the costly jewel, but nothing of the future was revealed to her. His hair was very black and smooth. Never did any one see a hair of it ruffled. His eyes were steel gray, but so heavily lashed that they appeared black. The upper part of his face and his chin were good; his mouth was covered with a heavy mustache, so if there were any false or cruel lines there they were hidden. Yet all this was nothing compared with the genial courtesy of the man. It was stated of him by his fellow lawyers that he had never been seen to lose his temper, and that nothing could disturb him in the courtroom.

So astonished was our little Mignon that the gentleman was forced to repeat his question before she regained her self-possession; then she said a little bashfully:

"Of course I can. I'm Mignon McKinzie. Father is over there," indicating a little, bent, red-headed Scotchman, who was talking to a typical German, whose good-humored stolidity contrasted favorably with the temper of the smaller man.

"He appears engaged, so I will wait," the newcomer said graciously. "If I may be permitted, in the meanwhile I will introduce myself to Mr. McKinzie's daughter," handing Mignon a bit of pasteboard. Her face flushed and those wondrous eyes danced as she read the name and saw in one corner the magic word "Chicago."

"You come from Chicago?" she asked.

"Yes, I live there. May I not hand you to a seat?" gracefully placing her on a fallen tree, and leaning back against the trunk of a live one in an attitude he well knew was one of his most effective.

"How did you get here?" Mignon asked, wonderingly.

"I have been running about your country with my automobile, and, in fact, rode up here in it in order to see your father. I am collecting evidence relative to a case of mine."

How gracefully he talked and leaned against the tree! The girl was entranced, and felt as though in a dream. When her father came up, and having presented him to the stranger, she moved away.

Fifteen minutes later, she saw her father walking toward the central point of interest with Mr. Chatterton, and she felt a thrill of joy run through her when the former said in his sharp, crusty tones:

"Misther Chatterton, mother, will break bread with us," which was intensified a thousandfold when the guest, dropping lightly by her side, whispered:

"If he may sit by the Queen of the Feast."

Glancing from the aristocratic figure by her to the bountifully-spread cloths laid upon the ground one after the other, Mignon's face glowed with shame, and yet the feast was one that the most dainty epicure might enjoy. Huge hams, home raised and cured; luscious sausages and other pork dainties prepared by the excellent housewives about the board, according to recipes jealously guarded; piles upon piles of sweet, tender fried chickens that melted in the mouth; veal loaf made from the flesh of young calves bred upon the farms surrounding; pickles, jams and both cooked and fresh fruits of every description, garnered from the orchards which even now were heavy with a new harvest; breads in ordinary and fancy shapes, light as feathers, and exceedingly toothsome; cookies of all kinds; pies unsurpassed, and cakes so numerous and really good that it was impossible to taste even a due proportion of another variety of cake.

The girl glanced up at him curiously, but his face was exceedingly grave, and his manner perfect, so she smiled once more, for the frightful thought that perhaps he might be an infidel had crept into her tender heart and blackened all the world for a moment, as in that region no worse term could be applied to any one.

Gordon, much farther down the table, looked anxiously at his darling and the suave man of the world by her side, and he felt more annoyed that he was unable to reach her as the crowd wandered off to the platform, which had been erected still farther in the grove, and surmounted by two American flags. He saw the stranger raise his hat as he and Mignon neared the flag, and muttered to himself:

"Confound him! The rest of us honor our flag just as deeply as he, even if we don't make jackasses of ourselves raising our hats to it."

Being in this frame of mind it was really comforting to hear young Abe Neinstadder say in his drawling way:

"What in the Sam Hill is that there dude bobbing at on the platform? None of the big wigs is there yet."

"He is saluting the flag," Gordon said testily.

"Oh, he is! And is that the way big guns do in his part of the country?"

Gordon nodded.

With a grin from ear to ear spreading over his face, the young farmer began to circulate among his friends, and within five minutes each one, with a girl by his side, walked past the platform, the girls giggling, and bowed profoundly, trying to imitate and exaggerate the courtly gesture of the attorney. His eyes twinkled as he saw them, but Mignon's eyes filled with tears, and she said angrily:

"Oh, the brutes, the cowards!" and she did not pause to see that Gordon was not among them. Poor child! she hated the companions of her life and yearned still more anxiously for the new life which was opening up before her.

"There, there, Miss McKinzie," Freeman Chatterton whispered. "Come a little away from this noisy crowd and compose yourself. I do not think you care for the ceremonies."

Care for them! She hated them. For years she had listened each Fourth of July to the reading of the Declaration of Independence by old Squire Nichols, who could not pronounce half of the words, or make the other half heard; to the singing of several patriotic songs, sung by a choir of untrained voices, and the recitation of different time-worn "pieces" and the delivery of the address. This Gordon was to make today, but in her anger at the insult offered her new acquaintance she forgot and suffered him to lead her away to the road where his machine, the first she had ever seen, was standing, and seat her in it, while he took his place by her side and under his questions opened her young heart in a manner which would have astonished her if she had not been under the spell of some strange dream.

He learned of the strange conditions existing in her home; that she was the only child of a second wife who had been a schoolteacher who came from the East, and died at her birth; that her brothers were the children of his father's first wife, and that the present Mrs. McKinzie had been married twice before, having several children by both husbands, and that the two McKinzies younger than she were children of the third venture of both Mr. and Mrs. McKinzie.

"Poor little oue!" the man whispered gently, and he felt a real pity for this delicate, high-spirited young girl, who so evidently inherited all her finer qualities from the little Eastern schoolteacher mother, who carried into her grave some unknown tragedy and gladly welcomed the longed-for release.

Then she told him gladly of her future, and his face lightened.

"Going into the city? The best thing possible, but you must not work for a wholesale machinery concern."

"It's a good place, so they say," she said in that wistful manner which seemed so much a part of her.

"I think I can find you a better. How would you like to work for me?" and the man leaned forward and laid one of his soft, white hands upon hers with a gentle pressure.

"Why, do you need a stenographer?" she cried, delightedly.

"Of course I do. I have one now, but she is going to leave very soon"—he thought to himself just about as soon as he could discharge her—"but you can take her place, and say nothing about this here. Things sometimes do not happen as we think they will."

"Then you may not need me?" and the red lips drooped.

"Let me whisper a secret to you. I will have a position in my office for you very, very soon, but say nothing about it as yet. Promise."

"Of course I won't."

"All right, then. Where will I find you?" and unhesitatingly the girl gave the acquaintance of a day the address she had refused her friend of a lifetime.

When he had carefully noted it down in his memorandum book, Chatterton asked quietly:

"Are you rested?"

"Entirely; we had better go back," and she started to her feet. In a minute the man had her out of the conveyance, and as they scrambled back up the bank he thought to himself:

"It's about the first time, old man, you ever resisted the temptation of a woman's mouth, but you can afford to wait a few weeks before you take that rustic kiss from those red lips," which shows that it is evident that Gordon and Mignon were not so far away from the world as they had supposed.

When they reached the platform with a reproachful conscience Mignon saw Gordon upon it, and these words fell upon her ears:

"I just want to say now to clinch what I have tried to demonstrate, that a good citizen is a good man, or, in other words, it is the good man who makes the good citizen. The man who can show a clean record, an upright life, and one who has tried to do his best, whether as farmer or merchant prince, president or school director—in him is to be found the true type of a good citizen."

The language was simple, but effective, and the good-hearted neighbors who had known the man from infancy were proud of him, and crowded about to congratulate and exult, and nothing pleased him more than the soft, "I am proud of you," from Mignon's lips, although the next moment he saw her strolling away toward home with this ever-present stranger. Could he have heard their words his honest heart would have ached sorely, for, as she made way for others, Chatterton said:

"Your roses are wilted. You should never wear faded ones."

"They are slovenly," she admitted, "but I can get plenty more at home. Come back with me and let me show you our place before the asylum arrives. I call the family that, and Mrs. McKinzie has never forgiven me. You see, I am different from the rest. I made a bargain with father. He was to let me have all the education I wanted until I could earn my own living, and then I would give up my share in his property. I made it when I was only eight and he brought this wife home. I also had him promise that she shouldn't touch me."

"Why, my child, such a bargain will not stand in law. You are a minor."

"But I promised," she said innocently, and the great lawyer was silenced.

As they stood by the great white rose bush, however, he said earnestly:

"These roses are not fit for you. With your eyes and hair the only flowers you should wear are the rich glowing ones, with velvety petals, each one unfolding a new beauty of color and richness of fragrance, until the golden heart is reached. Think of these red roses heaped about you until they draw your very breath from you. Then there are other flowers of glowing hues; the magnificent American Beauty; the cold, weird camillas; the intoxicating hyacinths; the glowing Oriental orchids, and a thousand others, but above them all the red, deep red rose of love, the queen of them all. These wondrous flowers from every clime this little lady shall see when once we get to the enticing city by the lake," and the man whose eloquence swayed thousands, bent his glowing eyes upon the child's face. Slowly, as she listened, the tiny white roses from the bush her mother's hand had planted fell to the ground and a flush like a reflection from the wondrous flowers he talked of came into the delicate complexion.

Angel mother in the skies, can it be that your eyes are blinded to the peril of your daughter as she stands with innocent footsteps on the brink of this frightful chasm, the depths of which have never been fully sounded?

"There is light and beauty and joy there, little Mignon," the deep voice answered, when the girl gave a cry and, turning, flung herself into Gordon's arms, he having come up just in time, for before the city-bred man could act, although hampered as he was by Mignon's clinging arms, Gordon struck one well-planted blow, and the two men who were to enter so strangely into each other's lives in the future glared at one another over the dead and writhing body of a rattlesnake, the last which has been found in that vicinity, with the woman both were to risk so much to gain lying senseless in Gordon's arms.

CHAPTER II.

"How does love speak?"

Clatter, clatter, clatter—oh! what a noise, and how stifling the air of the large room in which Mignon McKinzie, with a dozen or more stenographers, was crowded early in August. It was one of those humid days which make the month almost unbearable, and it was worse for the country-bred girl than for those who were used to the heat and noise of the city.

In addition to the stenographers were a number of the men of the vast concern of which she found herself so insignificant a figure, and several office boys. All combined upon this particular morning in making themselves especially disagreeable, or so it appeared to her.

As she was rapidly transcribing her notes, taken the day before just before closing time, she heard one of the girls beside her say in a low tone, with her eyes bent upon her work:

"What did you think of it?"

"Fine and dandy. We had a champagne supper afterward."

"Come down!" returned the first speaker.

"Honest. My man was a high-stepper, lots of dough."

"Watch out! He's not sowing without expecting a harvest."

A careless laugh, with an upward toss of the head, was the only answer, but Mignon was astonished. Inexperienced and young as she was, she knew that such actions were reprehensible. Then her unwilling ears heard on the other side:

"Say, Nell, old Rollston's gone daffy on Mame."

"How'd you find out, Bess?"

"Saw him squeeze her hand, and he was waiting for her when she went out last night."

The girl called Nell, a handsome girl in a dashing way, hesitated a moment and then said seriously:

"If she can hold him it will be a pretty good thing for her," then added: "Watch out, the old man's looking this way," and both machines began the terrible clatter again which beat the weary, insistent dirge upon her tired brain.

"Failure, failure, failure," all this noise and heat seemed to say; but she threw back her head and with the determined spirit which was her birthright she muttered between her clenched teeth:

"Not as long as there is a single bone in my body," and she forged ahead.

The heat became greater. A red, angry-looking sun poured its rays through the bare, staring windows which were all along one side of the room, and fell upon the many heads feverishly bending over desk or machine.

The men were in their shirt sleeves, while the girls, with collars cast aside, worked with sleeves rolled up to the armpit, and dresses turned in; that is, all except Mignon, to whom the practice seemed revolting. She had been used to see her father and brothers come in from the harvest field, the necks of their gingham shirts turned back from their bronzed chests, reeking with the sweat of the fields, but it appeared different to have these men cast aside so much of their apparel, and sit about in an attire they would not be seen in except by the office force. As for the girls displaying their necks and arms as they did, no mere words would suffice. In the four weeks she had worked with them she had marveled, however, not only at their manners but at the amount of pleasure they were able to extract from their lives.

Another thing she had discovered was that the seven dollars, her salary, which had appeared so munificent a sum to her inexperienced eyes, was not sufficient to support any girl who lived alone in the city. If she had not been well supplied with clothes, and a few dollars, already she would have felt the pinch.

The noise increased, and for a moment her busy fingers faltered as she thought for perhaps the fiftieth time that morning:

"Where is Mr. Chatterton?"

A week after her arrival she had received a call on the telephone, and over its noncommittal wires she received a pleasant greeting from him, and the assurance that he would soon be ready for her. Since then he had preserved profound silence. Would he never call her up again? was her constant thought.

It was all so frightfully sordid. The men and women worked together in a familiarity which was revolting to her, cheated each other and those over them, deceived and gossiped until there appeared that no one had a clean record. In those four weeks the pure, sweet young girl had learned more of misery, sin and sorrow than ever before in her young life, but fortunately for her she understood but little of it.

Just when things appeared to be almost more than she could endure, one of the office boys passing her with a huge pastepot in his hand rubbed the brush carelessly across her cheek, saying as he did so:

"Need a little bit of paint, Miss Greeny."

A widespread giggle spread through the room and followed her as she went with crimson face to wash off the evil-smelling, sticky plaster, while both office boys hugged each other behind a desk in their joy at getting "a rise out of 'Miss Greeny,'" as they had dubbed her, for, although she had restrained her tongue, her flushed face and flashing eyes showed them that the plot had worked.

When she returned she was told that "Grandpa" wanted her, and, picking up her book, she went to the desk of the man for whom she did not like to work. He was not as old as his bald head and lined face would suggest, but "Grandpa" he had been named, and "Grandpa" he would remain with the force working under him.

The first day she had been in the office she had taken some letters for him, and he had asked her to go to dinner with him. Although the child had refused as politely as possible, for instinct protected her, he had been offended, and continually found fault with all she did, so that she dreaded his summons.

His shaggy brows were drawn together as she advanced to his side and asked quietly:

"Do you wish to see me?"

"Yes, I do," was his angry answer. "You are a nice stenographer to make a mistake like this!"

"What is it?" How refined and gentle her voice sounded!

"Sent this bill of Oldenfellow's to Crabtree Bros., and the devil knows where Crabtrees' went!"

"The mistake is not mine," Mignon said earnestly. "I make out my own bills, but the envelopes are addressed by some one else."

"What in hell is that for? Can't you get through your own work?" he shouted. "That's it, employ country help and you get country work. Groton!" shouting across the room to a slender, fair-haired young fellow, whose slender figure and watery eyes denoted overwork and insufficient food.

"Yes, sir," that individual said, as he almost ran across the room.

"See here—this infernal mistake. Crabtrees' have got hold of the fact that we are allowing Oldenfellow to get more of a discount than we give them."

"Do they return the bill?"

"Of course they don't," with a sneer. "They simply write us thanking us for the information and tell us that in the future they will deduct the same amount of discount. That is a nice way to do business!" and pounding the desk with his fist, the head of the room indulged in language which made Mignon's heart grow cold, and chased every bit of color from her beautiful face.

At last, having exhausted himself, he leaned back in his chair and called for the book in which a copy had been taken of the bill which was causing all this trouble. As she looked at the great, coarse man, Mignon instinctively contrasted him not to brave, honest Gordon, but to Freeman Chatterton, and longed so earnestly to see the latter. That Fourth of July had wrought a change in the girl. Never again would she be a child. As she thought of him and that day she felt she could again breathe the sweet, flower-scented air; hear the merry tones of the good people of whom she had been ashamed; and she longed to go back—back to the unkind stepmother, the unsympathetic father, the brusque elder brothers, and even the ill-trained half-sisters.

While she was thus brooding, the office boy, the one who had played his practical joke on her but a few moments before, arrived with the copy book, and as he stood there he stuck out his tongue at one who had never harmed him in any way.

Opening the book, the manager hastily turned to the copied bill. In the clean, clear typing of Mignon, with each letter standing forth exactly as the others, he saw that the name and address were correctly given, and at the same time he noticed that her work was far in advance of that of any of the other girls.

Seeing that she was not to blame in this instance, he turned toward his clerk and thundered:

"Perhaps you can explain why the bill appears all right here, and yet it was not sent out correctly? Why is it, girl, that you did not write your envelope correctly?" turning fiercely to Mignon, who, alarmed by his manner, turned still paler and shrunk under his look. Long was she to remember that face, although she did not know at the time that its owner bore the name of John T. Digby, one destined to become famous within a few wears as a manipulator of trusts. Neither did he, as he glowered at the lovely girl, imagine for the moment that the day was coming when he would give all that he possessed to efface her bad opinion of him.

She had not been in the office a full month, and yet nearly every man in it was her devoted slave, with the exception of Digby. For this reason the girls did not like her, and they inspired the office boys to annoy her.

Among her most ardent, though silent, admirers was Tom Groton, and scared as he was of his employer, his love made him brave, and he returned:

"Miss McKinzie writes so much faster and better than some of the other girls that I have had them do all envelopes, when we get rushed at the close of the day, and she makes out their bills. She has done this willingly, although it meant harder work for her."

John Digby was a keen man of business, and, as the saying goes, "knew on which side his bread was buttered," so he snapped at getting extra work out of the girl, although he only said with a growl:

"Send the girl to me who wrote envelopes. You may go," to Mignon, and she went back to her desk, almost ill with indignation and mortification, although her eyes were dry, and she made her machine sway and throb as she rattled along at it, and felt a little disgust for the other girl who came back weeping at the reprof she had received.

The hands of the clock were wearily moving from eleven to twelve; the heat was worse and worse; the different girls looked with envy at the dainty tendrils of hair falling over Mignon's forehead, for their hair was dank and stringy with the heat. Suddenly the other office boy cried out in an unnecessarily loud voice:

"Miss McKinzie at the 'phone," and with her face flushing with hope, Mignon hastened into the stifling closet where the telephone was hung.

Her modest "Hello" was answered by a voice which made her heart leap with joy.

"That you, Miss McKinzie? Know who I am?"

"Mr. Chatterton," came back in tones which trembled in spite of her efforts.

"Good! I see you have not forgotten me. Would have called up before, but I have been very busy."

The man whose words were like manna to the fair young girl did not explain that his business had consisted in sending his wife to Europe for an indefinite stay; as that Fourth of July day had proved serious to Freeman Chatterton as well as to Mignon, he had been maturing plans which necessitated an entire liberty of action.

"I am so glad you called just now," Mignon half sobbed.

"Anything the matter?" he returned, his concern sounding very plainly.

"Yes, oh, yes!"

"So sorry. I say, throw up your job right now and come to my office. You know the address. I say, will you?"

Mignon's head spun around. Leave those terrible surroundings, that overbearing man, everything which was so loathsome! Go? Of course she would, and she cried back happily:

"If you would like," and he returned with a note of triumph in his voice:

"Indeed I would. Just leave and come to me and we will go to lunch together. I'll expect you at 12:30. Good-by," and she heard his voice trail away in the distance.

All unconscious had she been of anything outside while he was talking, but now through the glass door she saw that all eyes were upon her, and a voice was calling her name. Half faint from the heat of the telephone box, and the happiness which was awaiting her, she opened the door, and almost staggered as she stepped forth. Then she heard quite plainly the hoarse voice of John Digby bellowing:

"Girl, what is your name? McKinzie—that McKinzie girl, damn you, come here, I say!"

Slowly she turned, and with her well-poised head held high, walked over to the desk of one who no longer had any power over her.

"I want to tell you something, young woman, that we don't allow any such waste of our time. We don't have telephones for you girls to make your dates on. It has to be stopped."

With her wondrous eyes alight, Mignon looked him fairly in the face as she said distinctly:

"It is stopped as far as I am concerned. Please accept my resignation, to take place this moment."

If his patient, long-suffering wife had dared to oppose him, John Digby would not have been more astonished, but he finally recovered himself, to say, angrily:

"You can't leave, so stop this fussing and go back to your work."

Without a word Mignon returned to her desk, and, taking out her several personal possessions, closed it and started to leave the room, when he called her back.

"Didn't I tell you you could not leave?"

"That makes no difference, I am leaving," Mignon answered, stopping in the middle of the room.

"You sha'n't have a cent of salary."

Mignon smiled quietly. That had been payday, and she had received her money up to the first of the month. To leave there she was entirely willing to forfeit the little due her.

"That rests entirely with you," she returned. "I can only say that I hope with all my heart that the rest can find other positions as I have, so they may get away from here."

"I won't give you any recommendation."

Mignon had reached the door, and as she stood there, pale, exhausted by the heat, her experiences and the excitement of the morning, so they remembered her, and her image remained in more than one heart as the ideal of true womanliness.

In her sweet, low voice she said her last words, and they were to ring in the ears of John Digby for many a day and to be recalled years afterward:

"No recommendation of yours could profit an innocent, modest girl. As you have treated me and others within your power, so will punishment be meted out to you," and then she vanished from their sight, leaving all of them a theme of conversation for many days to come, and, although they made numerous conjectures, none knew the truth.

An hour later Mignon entered a handsome suite of offices in the Woman's Temple and, tapping upon the door bearing the words "Private; Freeman L. Chatterton," she saw the man for whom her heart had longed so wearily, and near his desk a smaller one bearing a great bunch of American Beauty roses. They alone would have welcomed her aside from his pleasant words, yet she felt bewildered when he said, with some deeper meaning in his voice than appeared on the surface:

"Here are a few of the roses I promised you. They are only American Beauties today. One of these days I am going to bring you a bunch of the rich red roses of love and teach you their lesson which you will then understand."

CHAPTER III.

"The strength of the man begets love."

The same day that Mignon entered the employ of Freeman Chatterton, Gordon Wainwright came to Chicago, and all unknown to either walked past the great office building just as she was bending in girlish ecstasy over the glowing American Beauties. Had he known, could he have comprehended the danger in which the hapless girl stood, or read the dark thoughts of the man standing by her side, he would have risked everything to have delivered his darling from the clutches of one a thousand times more dangerous than the deadly serpent he had slain. Fortunately, or unfortunately, the events of the future are sealed from our earth-bound eyes, and he walked jauntily past, drinking in his fill of the wonderful scenes about him.

All his life he had looked toward Chicago as the coming city, and four years spent in New Haven had not changed his point of view. During his summer vacations he had remained in the East, not even coming back for the World's Fair, so that the city seemed like an entirely remodeled one, although he had never spent much time in its confines. The changes evoked by the great Fair astonished him. On every side skyscrapers were replacing small buildings, and the stir and bustle of the teeming, Western life thrilled his pulses. A brisk wind blew in from the lake, cooling his heated face, and instinctively he walked down Monroe street to Michigan, and then up past the Art Museum. Out and beyond gleamed the great lake. His heart glowed. After four long years he was at last ready to begin his career in the city by the lake. If he wearied, if his pulses failed to throb with exultation, he would seek a renewal at the source of inspiration, the wonderful lake, and go out refreshed. Poor, bright-eyed, trusting young fellow. Little was he to know of the long nights he was to pace where his eyes would fall upon the gleaming waters, trying to solve a great mystery and one which was eating out his honest, noble heart.

"It is glorious!" he cried out aloud, taking off his hat and turning to get the full benefit of the breeze. Suddenly, on an instant, the wind shifted, and he felt a shiver run through him. The captious lake was no longer dimpling in the sun, but dark and stormy looking, and waves, foam-flecked, began to dash against the unnatural barriers man's hand had raised. At that moment Mignon and Chatterton took their places at a table in one of the most notorious restaurants in the city, in a private room, and he was asking in his soft, mellow voice:

"And what will my Rose have?" And she, almost too flustrated to answer, only smiled and said timidly:

"You order," and he had replied, still more gently:

"Of course I will, and I wish I could always order everything for you," at which the dark eyes were raised to his face in wonderment, and the skillful man of the world was wise enough to change the subject, not wishing to scare his prey.

However, all unconscious, Gordon walked about, enjoying himself and impressing upon his mind the names and locations of the various streets for future reference, for he knew that no newspaper would want a man who knew nothing of locality.

His mother had always claimed that her only child was born under a fortunate star, and that he was a mascot because he had come into the world with a caul. Certainly, so far it had seemed as though he was destined by fate to a happy life; but he was only twenty-three, and a man has many years to live after that. As he walked along, his bright, clear eyes storing up facts in the busy brain, his finely developed, athletic figure—for he had pulled stroke oar of his crew and been left fielder of the substitute ball team, as well as an all-round athlete—attracted attention from many. In contrast to the ill-formed, stunted men he passed, many of whom spent their growing years in stores and offices, he appeared like a giant, and more than one girl looked shyly her admiration; but it all passed by unheeded.

We want Boys like these

Any boy who is willing to work in spare time can earn as much money as he wants. We want boys in every town to sell

The Saturday Evening Post

Thousands of boys are making many dollars weekly in this work. Some are making $10 to $15 regularly. No money required to begin. We furnish the first week's supply free. You can start next week if you write now. With the magazines we will send a booklet, "Boys Who Make Money," which will show you how to make a success of the work.

$250 in Cash as extra prizes for those who do good work each month.

THE CURTIS PUBLISHING COMPANY, 3874 Arch Street, Philadelphia

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger. When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

Finally his steps led him across the river to the North Side. Passing up North Clark street, he finally turned on Huron, and was looking about at the elegant residences, intending to go to the lake which was pounding against the sea wall, when his quick ear caught the clatter of horses' hoofs, and a carriage dashed in sight, drawn by superb roan horses running away.

Great, maddened brutes they were, utterly beyond the control of the frightened coachman or the footman, who both crouched helpless, regardless of the safety of their mistress. Never will Gordon Wainwright forget the first sight he had of her. Calm as though sitting in her own drawing-room, the occupant of the vehicle held firmly to the sides of the vehicle, although her eyes blazed like great jewels.

With the young man, to see was to act, and in less time than it has taken to describe the situation he had sprung to the side of the raging horses and, thrusting his firm, strong hand into the opened, foaming mouth of the brute nearest him, he grasped the bit and flung his whole weight upon it. For a moment his tense figure swung in midair, while the horses champed and plunged; but his strength told. The speed slackened, and before Wells street was reached the runaway was ended, and Gordon held the trembling horses at a standstill.

Now that all danger was over, the two servants scrambled down and began to talk rapidly, each blaming the other, when a clear, imperious voice said sharply:

"Harris! Michael!"

The men turned, as did Gordon, but it was the latter who sprang to the assistance of the owner of the voice.

With his natural, pleasant manner, he advanced easily, saying quietly, as he took off his hat:

"There is no more danger now. The horses are thoroughly subdued, but they ought to be very carefully looked after."

"I had better go into a drug store and wait for another carriage, then?" she asked, her voice displaying no trace of the ordeal through which she had passed.

"I really think so," was the quiet answer.

Turning to the discomfited men, she said, coldly:

"Take these horses back, and come for me as soon as possible. I will be over there," indicating a drug store, then turning to Gordon, she asked:

"Will you stay with me? I am a little upset," and before he could answer she fainted away.

For a second time that day his strength was exerted, for he picked up the fair stranger as though she were a child and carried her to the nearest drug store, and helped the druggist and a physician who was called to restore her. At last the eyes he had already noticed, opened, and after a moment the lady, refusing help, sat up and looked about her.

These two, whose lives were to be marvelously intermingled, presented a curious appearance. Gordon's clothing was covered with dust and torn in several places. His hands were bleeding and his hat broken. The lady's face was drenched with water and her hair unloosened, while her French hat, held by a single pin, was over one ear. Still, in spite of this, those standing about thought that they had never seen two such magnificent specimens of humanity. As we have said before, Gordon was a big man, well proportioned, who knew how to carry his flesh. A pair of honest, intelligent, blue eyes looked from, his sun-browned face, while his light hair showed a slight tendency to curl at the ends, and to wave where it was thrown back from a high forehead.

The lady, whose well rounded, exquisitely curved figure indicated that she was no longer a girl, was one of the beauties of Chicago, and the wife of Barton Thompson, who, strange as it may seem, was the president of the great concern in which John T. Digby was interested, whose employ Mignon had left that very day. So does destiny weave the threads of various lives into the rope of existence.

Mrs. Thompson, whose sense of elegance chafed under the commonplace name, only rejoicing that her own of Daphne was more expressive and unusual, was more than beautiful—she was bewitching, alluring and seductive. Her beauty was of a nature to bewilder, entrance and mislead. In a face of transparent pallor, clear as crystal and as hard, were set eyes so black as to cause wonderment. They were not large, but so skillfully did she manage them that this which in another might have proved a defect was not noticed. The eyelashes and eyebrows were of a delicate brown in color, but heavy, and the latter were well arched. The nose was somewhat fleshy, with nostrils which trembled with every emotion and were the only feature this lady could not control. Her mouth was rich, full, and glowingly red, and when she smiled small, even teeth were displayed. Above these many seeming contradictions was a wonderful mass of heavy hair, smooth and glossy, of a marvelous golden hue, like the sheen of gold leaf, and yet so natural that no one ever accused Mrs. Thompson of calling upon art to improve the gifts nature had been so lavish in bestowing.

At last her eyes fell upon Gordon, who had stepped a little aside, and a smile curved her red lips, from which the color had not fled, and after straightening her hat, she held out a soft, white hand, glittering with jewels, from which the glove had been hastily pulled when she was being resuscitated, and said softly:

"I think you saved my life. I shall never forget it, for life is so full and sweet, and I want to drain my cup to the very bottom, so you have done me a wonderful service," and as he took the hand and bowed over it, Gordon entered another phase of existence and began laying the wall which was to rise between him and his life-love, Mignon.

In the Ledger issue of next week another installment of this extremely captivating story will be offered our readers. We wish to again call attention to our advertisements on pages thirteen and fifteen, offering cameras and patterns gratis to all subscribers.

Such a Mistake.

The war correspondent in Nagasaki has sent his Jap servant to the store for some supplies. The man has been delayed, so the correspondent telephones.

"Hello," he says to the clerk, who is an American. "Is Takachua Bito down there?"

"No, sir," is the reply, "but we have sixteen other kinds of breakfast food."

Always Ahead of Time.

Smith—Your friend Wheeler is a crank on punctuality, isn't he?

Brown—I should say he is. Why, he even carries his watch in the rear pocket of his trousers to prevent his ever being behind time.

Unsafe.

First Nurse—I'm afraid I can't come with you tomorrow.

Second Nurse—Why not?

First Nurse—Well, I don't like to leave the baby with its mother.

A MAN OF MYSTERY;

OR

WHO WAS BETRAYED

By Colonel Prentiss Ingraham.

[Copyright, 1904, by W. D. Boyce Co.]

Begun in No. 32, Aug. 6. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER X.

LOVE AND WAR.

Lark Lawless, as he had decided in his own mind, had substantial reasons for trying his chances matrimonially with Coralie St. Orme, and that young lady, on her part, had a motive of her own for seeming to encourage his advances.

We may admit, indeed, that the fair Cora's motives were not unmixed. Ralph Rohan had, in her eyes, proved himself something of a laggard in love; and though Miss St. Orme had as little of the coquette in her composition as most of her sisters, she was not above using the weapons with which, it must be said, she had been most bountifully provided.

So it was that Ralph, who, as he had avowed in the beginning, was rather prepossessed in the fascinating young Irishman's favor, soon began to see decidedly more of that delectable personage than he cared to see; while Cora, who had expressed not only her dislike, but the grave suspicion she had formed against him, began really, it would seem, to take delight in his society.

As far as Major Warder was considered, he was simply enchanted. He had, as we have seen, or fancied he had, a deep interest in the Irish question, and this representative of the cause did not fail to put it forward in a light the most acceptable to a man of the Major's weaknesses and prejudices.

The old gentleman had no fear of being called upon some day to receive Mr. Lawless as a prospective nephew-in-law. He had long looked upon Ralph Rohan in that light; and, if even a man of his rather blunted capacity for discernment could not avoid seeing that Lark's attentions to Cora were becoming marked, he rather enjoyed the situation. He, too, had begun to think young Rohan not the ardent lover that the case called for, and this move on the part of the handsome young Irishman, whether encouraged by Cora or not, was just what the condition of things demanded.

At the first social hit thus made by Lawless, Ralph was decidedly pleased. He rather liked the little that he had seen of Lark, and would never have thought of setting him down as an adventurer. In his company the wily politician had displayed the most adroit tactics possible.

With Major Warder, it may be said, he had sailed on a different tack. Lark was one who had a marvelous faculty for measuring his man; and if the flattery he administered to Miss St. Orme's guardian was in reality a little gross and commonplace, it was no less true that the Major was ready to receive the largest dose of it.

But the time soon came when Ralph wished the man he had been so disposed to like in Tipperary, or Botany Bay.

It may seem a little odd, perhaps, that Lark Lawless, with his ready tact, and assumed delicacy and sympathy, could not perceive that young Rohan had begun to consider his room more desirable than his company. It is true that Ralph strove loyally to hide the fact, and it may have been that, in some measure, he succeeded. It is more probable, however, that Lark grasped the entire situation, but that it did not suit his plans to seem as if he did so.

In Ralph's case, the feeling of security that had been his so long soon gave place to one of faint-heartedness. He began to think that it was all over—that Lawless had won, and he had lost. And he was not alone in that opinion. Lark himself was beginning to feel the ground solid beneath his feet, and actually laid the flattering unction to his soul that, in due time, he had only to ask and receive.

His sophistries when conscience (and he had still, strange to say, the ghost of one remaining) hinted at acting in a dishonorable way toward his friend Rohan were amusing.

Ralph, he argued, had no such need to marry an heiress as he had, and though he had known the true state of things from another source, yet he contended that the young man had never given him the slightest hint of his intentions with regard to Miss St. Orme. There was then, as he was bent on seeing it, no treachery in the case.

But Lark Lawless still kept his other iron in the fire. He had explained, as all along he had intended doing to Polinski, the true inwardness of the interview he had planned between McDermot and themselves; and thus shown that amiable old enthusiast that there was no chance of enlisting the extreme men on his side. He and his Polish friend sat together discussing the grand project of Polinski. They had little fear of being overheard—indeed, there was nothing incendiary in their talk—so they chatted, though in an undertone, in the rotunda of Lark's hotel.

"You thought my scheme a madman's vision when I first broached it to you," said the old man quietly. "No, never mind excusing yourself; it was, I dare say, only natural.

"But now, how is it? Come, you can tell me without fear, and with perfect candor."

"I admit that I see a possibility in it."

"You do?"

"Yes; but a bare possibility."

"Just so. But still enough to make it worth while to strike the moment arrives."

"Well, yes—but——"

He paused, and put on a thoughtful air.

"Well, but——" questioned Polinski.

"What I was about to say," answered Lark, looking up with a sudden brightness that had the semblance of an inspiration; "what I was about to say is this—we must not lose the cause for lack of a little plain speaking. You have been candid with me. You have shown me what you hope and expect. You have confided to me names, facts and figures. You tell me that I have your entire confidence, and that I now know all that you have to tell."

"Of course there are details," was the rather hesitating reply; "I might say countless delays. But you have the main points now in your possession."

"Of course, having these facts from you, at first hand, I am assured of their verity; but, when it comes to putting such stupendous machinery in operation, the question arises—who is there to do it?"

Lark put this with accustomed modesty.

"Yourself, my dear sir."

"You must be jesting, Mr. Polinski. Admitting that I am all your partiality would make me out to be, I have neither your years, your learning, your experience, nor your authority. I am simply Larkin Lawless of the Land League."

"And I am simply Paul Polinski of Poland, and that is, alas! nowhere."

"Can you think of no other, my friend?"

"I have fixed on you as the man."

Lawless assumed the air of one who was crushed by the weight of honors that were thrust upon him.

"But supposing, Mr. Polinski, I were to carry this prodigious plan of yours—of ours, may I say?—to the men in England, and Ireland who might be expected to look upon it with favor, whom am I representing?"

"The Cause simply, and that is enough. Remember that when we strike, we strike for life or death. No man knows that better than myself. A single indiscretion will be fatal. I have long weighed the chances, and counted the costs."

"I know that the world knows it," said Lawless; "and it is not the danger that makes me hesitate. However, I bind myself to it without reserve."

"I knew you would." The aged patriot rose from his chair and extended his hand, public though the place was where they were seated. "Ireland," he said, in a meaning whisper.

"Poland," responded his colleague.

"And humanity!"

Lark Lawless tried hard to look sufficiently impressed.

"But first, last and all through the affair, I work only as your lieutenant."

As the two men started for the street, Polinski's eye, ever on the alert, fell upon the Frenchman, Mondelet, whom he remembered having seen at Eastlak.

"You know him?" he whispered.

"I recollect his phiz," said Lark.

"Do you think he heard anything?"

"Hardly. He is deaf as a post, and speaks no English besides."

The Pole seemed satisfied.

He was thoroughly so with the result of his Irish lieutenant.

Whether the latter was equally so. it would be hard to say. In his connection with the Land League, and with other societies more or less revolutionary in their character, he had been obliged to know many things, the knowledge of which, while it did not gall the little that was left of his conscience, was unpleasant to carry, for the simple reason that it was dangerous to possess it.

He knew—few men better—the dark and sinister side of politics, and he had, in the few years in which he had been mixed up in them, been doing what many of his countrymen had done—viz., mixing fire and gunpowder in the hope that there would be no explosion. Thus it was that he felt convinced there were thousands of men in New York, and many of them partly under his guidance, who were so visionary and untutored in history that Polinski's wild scheme would instantly commend itself to them as perfectly feasible.

That there were "millions in it" eventually, he had little doubt; and, at all events, it was an excellent method for doing nothing at all, while professing to do everything, and that was just what the patriotic Larkin Lawless had been endeavoring to do for some time.

He would not have an easy part to play—he could see that well enough—and he was aware that between two stools he might come to the ground; but, as he had always been able to balance himself with great adroitness, he had plenty of confidence in himself for this new undertaking.

There was one thing, however, in connection with it which he would fain know, and that was, how many, beside himself, were repositories of this gigantic scheme. This was soon settled by Polinski's next remark.

"Even here," the old man said, "I have been watched so closely, that I fear to correspond with any one on the one subject that lies near my heart, the great aim and object of my life. For still stronger reasons I have been unable to communicate it to our friends in Europe."

"But you have documents?"

"None."

So, then, said Lark to himself, that half-cracked old pate contains the sole record of this phantasmal scheme; and when, in the course of a few years at most, it must cease to plot and plan, this gorgeous funeral pile which he has prepared for the crowned heads will naturally fall to pieces. Meanwhile, he could see that it was wild and daring enough to enlist the passionate sympathies of all the political desperadoes in his set; and, while it was certain to come to nothing, it could be made to work greatly to the advantage, pecuniarily, of the one who pulled the strings—to wit, himself.

Why was it that he had never thought of such a scheme before? But then, clever though he was, he was incapable of creating it. He could profit by it, just as he hoped to profit by his matrimonial venture with Cora St. Orme, but that was all.

It needed, and he had to own that much to himself, the venerable, romantic and picturesque figure of Paul Polinski behind it.

CHAPTER XI.

THE FIRST REVERSE.

Major Warder and his beautiful niece had been for some time in the city, and the daring Mark Lawless had by no means neglected the opportunities that had been his.

In one respect he had already been successful beyond his most sanguine expectations. Ralph Rohan had to all appearances stepped aside and left the coast clear.

The fact was, Ralph had become convinced that Miss St. Orme had not only gotten over her violent prejudice against Mr. Lawless, but had permitted him to take the place in her heart which he, poor man, had too confidently flattered himself was filled by his own image. He could see wherein he had been at fault, but, he argued with himself, it was now too late to make the move he had so long neglected; so he moved—off.

With a little more experience of the "tricks and manners" of the sex, Ralph would have known that the change in Cora's deportment toward himself meant the very strongest kind of encouragement for him. But she set herself to deceive him in this, and she succeeded beyond her hopes. She was not exactly a born flirt, and so was fated to discover that she had overshot the mark.

The older suitor, so far from being persuaded to courage, had abruptly retired in favor of the new, and Cora St. Orme began to think her little piece of strategic warfare all the more unworthy because it had so signally failed. She had committed no very great or unusual fault, according to a young lady's code of morals; but, for all that, she felt more and more humiliated and angry with herself when she saw what had been the effect of it.

"I acted like a flirt," she sobbed, when she found how it had ended. "I was heartless. Ralph saw it and took the only course an honorable man could take. I cannot blame him. I brought it upon myself."

Ralph Rohan was somewhat cowardly in love affairs, it must be confessed; but it matters not how courageous or how discerning a man may be, love has the power to quench that spirit in him. There is nothing that the object of his love may do that he will not search out reasons for such acts on her part; and with a blind fatality will, in every case, find the wrong ones.

The long and short of it was, to Ralph's mind, Larkin Lawless had come, had seen, and had conquered.

And yet, one single step, had Ralph been the man to take it, would have—and he well knew it—turned the tide that seemed to have set in against him.

It will be remembered that, at the time of Anne Molyneux's rescue from the base of the cliff at "Lovers' Leap," Cora St. Orme had picked up near the spot from which the woman had fallen, or had been thrown, a gold sleeve-button, having upon it in relief the initial "L." This she gave to Ralph Rohan, who had laughed skeptically at her suggestion that it belonged to Lawless, for whom at that time she avowed a strong dislike.

Ralph had kept it, however, and, on the morning on which Lark Lawless took his departure from Eastlake, it so happened that he found the mate to it. He was standing in the court of their hotel, when something, thrown from a window above, rattled on the pavement near him. He stooped and picked it up, glancing at the same time up toward the open window from which it must have come.

"Ah! His room," he thought. "Felt, probably, that it might not be safe to have a duplicate. Cora must have been right, after all."

Had Ralph but gone to his lady-love at that moment and told her of his discovery, much trouble might have been spared to both of them; but he had been too much piqued by what had already occurred.

"Let her find out her mistake for herself," he said. "She shall not have the opportunity of charging me with meanly trying in such a way to reinstate myself."

So infatuated did Rohan believe the girl to be with Lawless that he doubted very much whether even such convincing proof of the fellow's unworthiness would now have any weight with her.

To despair in love is a bad business, but it is amazing to observe the smallness of capital upon which the average young man is ready to open a connection in that line. And Ralph Rohan was no wiser in his generation than young men are generally made. So it was that he stepped aside, and Larkin Lawless, to all appearances, took his place.

Now, at all events, Miss St. Orme could not complain of a cold and unappreciative lover. There was always demonstration enough, and to spare, when Lark was playing at lovemaking.

It is no doubt an embarrassing thing for a maiden to discern the actual hunger of love in a young man's eyes; but, in a little time, she is likely to become reconciled to the unaccustomed sense of having such an adjunct, and, even when she is far from reciprocating the sentiment, rather likes it than otherwise.

But Cora St. Orme had never overcome her distrust of Lark Lawless, and, when she saw that his attentions had had the effect of driving Ralph Rohan from the field, she positively hated. It may, therefore, be imagined that her reception of his declaration, when it came, was by no means flattering.

Lark had no premonition of this.

The young lady had been approachable enough from the start. He did not know a great deal about young women in society, it was true; but he thought he had tact, discernment and sufficient affectation of humility about him to know when a girl really liked him.

Had he delayed a little after Ralph Rohan's retirement he would have seen how fruitless must be such an appeal as he thought of making.

It so chanced, however, that Major Warder, who had become quite infatuated with the young patriot—though far from encouraging or even suspecting his attentions to his niece—gave a dinner-party, to which Lark was invited. Naturally, that young gentleman felt no temptation to send a regret on the occasion.

All through the feast Lark was in his element. This was the kind of entertainment in which his most winning style was especially drawn out. Dinners at the Major's, it is true, were as a rule rather solemn functions, and this, had it not been for the versatile young Hibernian, would have proved no exception.

It is very possible that, had Lark been seated at table where he could have caught the expression of Miss St. Orme's face, it might have thrown a damper upon his exuberance; but ignorance was bliss in this instance; and the thought of what he planned for the drawing-room made him even more the life of the occasion than usual.

For Lark Lawless had decided that on this evening he would bend all his energies to win fortune, which to him meant fame, and he felt that win he should.

When, at last, he had an opportunity of exchanging a few words with Cora, he could not but notice a coldness in her voice and manner, and something of a metallic glitter in her soft gray eyes; but all this he put down to causes encouraging to himself, and more especially when he noted a deeper color on her cheek than he remembered it to have worn previously.

When, therefore, to his suggestion that she should show him a new orchid upon which the Major had been dilating while at dinner, Miss St. Orme said nothing, but mechanically laid her hand on his arm, Lark Lawless, though flattered, was not surprised.

The surprise was yet to come.

"There is something that I feel I must say to you this evening," he began, after they had stood for some minutes in the conservatory, silently gazing at the floral beauties therein; "something that I cannot but hope you have ere this divined, brief though our acquaintance has been."

Cora stood, with bowed head, and said nothing.

Lark studied her attitude, and rather approved.

"Having intimated my belief that you must have understood me, must have found me out—am I not right, Miss St. Orme?"

"I have found you out," she said, quietly but firmly.

"Then I may say it. I love you, Cora! Will you be my wife?"

Then the young girl's head was raised.

Steadily her eyes gazed into his.

"Before I answer your question, Mr. Lawless," she said, "will you tell me one thing—how long is it since you have seen Miss Molyneux?"

He started as if shot.

"'leen Molyneux?" he at length managed to stammer.

"I said merely Miss Molyneux," the girl replied coldly; "but the name of the lady to whom I referred was Anne."

"Why should you question me in regard to her? I have no idea where she is."

"Nor have I. But that is not what I asked you. What I wished to know was when you had last seen her."

In the dim light in which they stood, Cora could not make out the expression on the face of Lark Lawless. It might have been better, perhaps, for her had she been able to do so, since forewarned is forearmed.

"And is this all you have to say to me?" he inquired, after a pause.

"Not quite, I believe, Mr. Lawless. I have, or rather a friend of mine has, something of yours which I found while we were at Eastlake. It was near 'Lovers' Leap' that I picked it up—a sleeve-button."

The next moment Lark Lawless was alone. His companion had vanished.

He stood for some time in deep thought. At length it occurred to him that he could reach the hall unseen, and thus take his departure unceremoniously.

But one expression escaped him:

"Coralie St. Orme, you have spoken your own doom!"

CHAPTER XII.

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY.

"Lives are not very valuable in the abstract, and probably mine is not in the concrete; but, such as it is, it is of some importance to myself, being the only one I have. However that may be, you have saved it, my young friend, and have a right to name your reward."

"I ask nothing."

It was in the Langham Hotel, in London, in an elegantly furnished private parlor, and the speakers were two whom we have seen at the railway station at Stansbury. One, as we know, was Aileen Molyneux, in male attire. The other—his card was in Aileen's hand—"Vladimir Vladiskoff, Russian Legation, London."

"I ask nothing," said Aileen.

"You are fortunate, then."

"No, except in having been able to do you the service you speak of, most unfortunate."

"What I meant was, you are rich; well to do, as they say here."

"I am poor—poorer than you can imagine."

"That means friendless?"

"Yes."

"Then you are so no longer."

Aileen said nothing.

"You have not mentioned your name," said the Russian.

"You did not ask it, but it is Loftus—Arthur Loftus."

"Ah! A good old Irish name. Now, your age? You look young."

"I am not yet one and twenty."

She was not, by three good years, but the past few days had aged her greatly, and she had the appearance of being older than the years she mentioned.

"Young, well-born, and evidently well educated—just so. So, you want nothing, you tell me? Well, I am less fortunate. I want you."

Aileen's color rose.

"What do you mean?" she asked.

"Just this. I am in need of a secretary. You will suit me, I feel confident."

"I thank you, but I cannot accept. I cannot remain here."

"Nor shall you. That is, if you will close in with my offer. I leave soon for America——"

"For America?"

"Yes; for an indefinite stay."

"Then I am ready. I will do anything in any capacity——"

"Glad you think better of my proposition, but the labor will not be very fatiguing. It may be three or four weeks before I am ready to sail, but your salary, though not your duties, will begin from today. Meantime you will take up your abode with me."

In this way Aileen's future for the time being was settled. The haste with which the young man acceded to the offer of Mr. Vladiskoff, when that gentleman mentioned America, convincing him that the strange youth had a sweetheart on the other side the water.

"Depend upon it," said the attache to himself, "that is what it means. The poor fellow has had the temerity to fall in love with some bright-eyed Yankee heiress whom he has seen skirmishing around over here, and is silly enough to take the first chance that offers to follow her.

"That is nothing to me, however; only I shall feel myself bound in common gratitude, to look out for the boy, and see that no harm comes to him."

Vladimir Vladiskoff's connection with his country's Legation at the Court of St. James, only nominal from the first, had closed, and he was now, as he had stated, about setting out for the United States; his visit, ostensibly one of pleasure, being uncertain in duration.

In reality, he had about as much need of a secretary as he had of a white elephant; but it had suddenly occurred to him that, as young Loftus proudly declined any pecuniary reward for the daring act by which he had saved his, Vladiskoff's, life at the imminent risk of his own, he could in this way eventually advance the young man's interests.

The accomplished Russian and his secretary had been but a short time in the land of the free when the latter gradually came to know that his employer, though professedly only on pleasure bent, had business of his own, or for others, and that of a peculiar character.

It was not that Vladiskoff was inclined to be communicative; for, drawn by gratitude though he was to Arthur Loftus, as we must now call Aileen, there was a studied reticence about the young man that repelled anything like confidence. But the secretary had eyes and ears, and the consequence was that the secret mission of Vladimir Vladiskoff was soon understood by him.

At first Loftus thought little and cared less about the matter, but when, after having made some stay in the Western cities, they returned to New York, and there the wealthy and popular Russian, though apparently devoted to society, began to court in a quiet manner the company of certain so-called patriots of Celtic birth or extraction, his hitherto indifferent and unassuming factotum suddenly became greatly interested.

Vladiskoff had apartments in the Brunswick, and there Loftus, on entering one morning, found him in close conversation with a prominent member of the Land League. The young man was about to withdraw unperceived, but the mention of a name by the visitor chained him for a moment; and then, to save himself, it seemed that he could not have done so. It was, of course, dishonorable, but such was the secretary's excitement that the thought never entered his mind, and would have had no influence upon his action had it done so.

Noiselessly as a cat he stepped toward the nearest window, and in a moment was behind the long, yellow curtains.

"And about this man Lawless," Vladiskoff was saying—"the name, by the way, is rather suggestive, is it not?—he is, you think, the best man to whom I can apply for the information I am in quest of?"

"The very best," was the reply. "He can tell you to what extent your countrymen on this side have allied themselves with us, and just what ones among them are to be relied on. In fact, it was he who completed the negotiations with Polinski, and introduced the old man to us."

"Ah, that brave old exile!" murmured the Russian. "His name comes to me like a household word."

"It will cheer him greatly, I am sure, to find a man in your position heart and soul with him," said the Land Leaguer.

"He little knows how many there are in the very highest circles, how many there will be when the time comes to strike."

"You would like to meet Lawless?"

"As soon as may be. Come to think of it, I believe I shall call upon him. It will be no more than proper, since I am the soliciting party."

"He will be proud of the attention, I assure you."

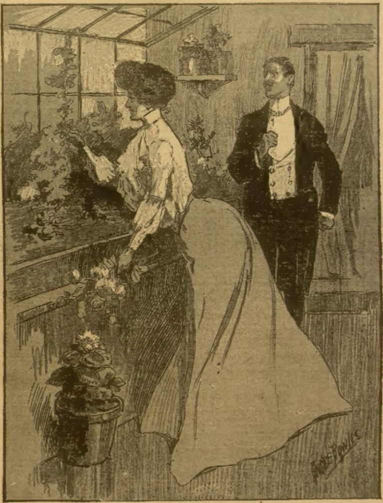
"His full name is—let me see—Larkin Lawless. Thank you! And his address? I wish my secretary was here to take it down. However, I'll remember it. Oh, you have his card? Better yet. Thanks, very much."

The interview closed, and Vladiskoff politely saw his visitor to the elevator.

When he returned, Arthur Loftus was seated by the table writing.

"Ah, you here? Good-morning," said the courtly Russian, pleasantly; and then he walked across the room to the window which Loftus had just left, and stood there absently drumming on the pane with his fingers.

Aileen well knew that Vladimir Vladiskoff was not really in sympathy with the Nihilists, although such had been the profession he made to the men who were wont to wait on him everywhere that he put up. It had been plain to her, for some time, that her patrician employer was collecting information—until now she believed it to be more from curiosity than from any other motive—but this last surely meant that some overt act was in contemplation, and that Larkin Lawless was to be employed in it.



"Aileen Molineux?" he at length stammered.

Lark Lawless! And were she and he again to meet?

Would he recognize her? She was confident he would not. She would be guarded, however; she would be seen as little as possible by him, but she would see him—ay, every day and hour that it was possible to do so—would see and watch him until the end.

But what end?

Aileen had never thought of that.

She could not say that Lawless had merited death at her hands. No; retribution called but for his disgrace. It demanded only that he should know what it meant to be a traducer, a fugitive and a vagabond on the face of the earth, and to have his hopes blighted forever.

She sought to bring about no more than this, and yet she felt, as she sat there, that the end of Lark Lawless would be death!

This extraordinary story will be continued in next week's Ledger. Our cameras and patterns are still offered free to all subscribers as advertised on pages thirteen and fifteen.

Between Friends.

Miss Antique—Mr. Sportingham asked me a funny question last night.

Miss Youngbud—What was it?

Miss Antique—He asked me why I had never married.

Miss Youngbud—Oh, then he evidently never saw you in the daytime.

◆

No wonder an actress is stuck up when her name appears on so many billboards

THE ROCK WIDOW.

BY NATHAN D. URNER.

After assuring herself that the lower part of her house was secured for the night, as was her custom, the Rock Widow sent for two servants to bed, and then retired to her own chamber—a large rear room on the ground floor, which had been her late husband's smoking, reading and dressing room combined—with considerable business anxiety disturbing her pretty head.

She was, nevertheless, soon fast asleep, after seeking her couch, and was only awakened toward morning by the noise of a chair being overturned in the front room or parlor, with which her own apartment connected by a short corridor and two doors, which were almost always open, as they chanced to be at this time.

She slipped noiselessly from her bed, and, though seized with a sudden fit of trembling at first, did not think of fainting as the idea of robbers in the house took possession of her, for she was a thoroughbred Californian, whose experience had comprised more solid adventure than is often allotted the gentler sex, besides being naturally brave and spirited.

Neither did the glance which she cast into the dimly lighted front room, and which took in the figure of a housebreaker, with a half-mask upon his face, and in the act of passing through an open window, whose treacherous fastenings had afforded him an entrance, with a pile of her late husband's holiday garments over his arm, cause an increase of irresolution or fear in the Rock Widow's nerves.

She merely slipped on her pink silk dressing-gown over her night dress, drew a revolver from under her pillow, and, gliding stealthily through the corridor, cocked the weapon, covered the enemy, and cried "Stand!" in a sharp, incisive tone, which caused the fellow to wheel in his tracks and confront her in dumb amazement.

There was light enough in the room for her to perceive that he was wholly unarmed, so that, with this advantage in her favor, the widow quickly mastered the slight trepidation, which had at first fluttered at her heart in spite of herself, and actually began to enjoy the situation.

"Turn up the gas a little, Mr. Burglar, that I may look at you," said she, in a less shrill but more commanding tone. "I'm not in the habit of killing men in this sort of light," she added, with some carelessness, in order to convey an impression of desperate and sanguinary antecedents on her part.

But the intruder gave a low, amused sort of laugh as he advanced to the middle of the room, and, obediently reaching to the chandelier above his head, turned on the faint glimmering gas jet to a full head, that made everything as bright as day.

He was a tall, rather thin young man, the extreme seediness of whose attire could not altogether dispossess his strong, active frame of a certain refined grace; his hair was jet-black, and flowing in unkempt, curling masses almost to his shoulders, his face was roughened with an uncared-for beard, and the eyes that looked through the dark half-mask that concealed the upper part of his face were black, intelligent and sparkling—perhaps with admiration, or, at least, so the widow chose to think. For now, for the first time, she began to be conscious that she was certainly appearing to advantage herself—from the masculine standpoint—and the thought brought a blush to her cheeks, while her disengaged hand gathered the folds of her loose wrapper still closer over her bosom, and her nude little feet began to tremble in the thick texture of the Axminster carpet in which they sank.

Then the thought of her position angered her not a little, and her right hand tightened upon the leveled weapon.

"So you are a pretty man!" she exclaimed, witheringly.

"I'd sooner be thought so by you than by any woman I ever saw!" cried the robber, in a voice evidently disguised by a pebble in the mouth, but nevertheless with unaffected eagerness and admiration.

"To come sneaking into honest folks' houses by night, robbing them of their valuables!" pursued the widow, in the same scornful tone, and disregarding the compliment by an impatient toss of her pretty head, which shook out her bright hair from its night braid, and brought it into lovely heaps upon her shoulders, which added not a little to her vexation.

The inconsiderate young man's only reply to the taunt was a deprecating gesture toward a neighboring sofa, upon which she saw that he had carefully laid the miscellaneous contents of the pockets belonging to the clothing he was in the act of stealing—including two or three gold coins—and the widow now remembered that, in arming and draping herself in the other room, she had noticed her own watch and jewelry untouched upon her bureau, which was directly alongside the cabinet from which the garments had been abstracted.

"Oh, you were merely stealing an outfit, then?" she said, much more gently.

The man bowed his head slightly, and still kept his black eyes riveted upon her, as though she were a banquet and he the unforbidden guest.

"What is your name, Mr. Man?" asked the widow.

"I shall not tell you."

"Take off your mask, sir."

He shook his head.

"Take it off, or I'll fire!" said the widow, fiercely.

"Fire away, madam," was the cool reply.

"There is nothing mean about you," said the widow. "You can go."

"Thank you, and Heaven bless you for a Pacific Slope angel, if there ever was one!" said the fellow, depositing the heap of clothes upon a chair, and moving toward the window with a swift step.

"I don't mean for you to go without the outfit," said the Rick Widow, impulsively. "What do you take me for? Pick up those clothes again," she added, in a sharper tone, which made him obey, though wonderingly. "I suppose I can make you a present of them, can't I? And suppose you go out of the hall door instead of the window; it looks much better. I will also give you those gold pieces on the sofa there, and you'll find a first-rate plug hat, though a trifle dusty, on the rack. Poor, dear, dead and gone Jones, he will never need the things any more, though I wish you had come in the daylight and asked for them. Good-by, and be honest."

The young man had possessed himself of the money at her command, and now, with the garments on his arm, and his shabby hat at his feet, stood silent and hesitating by the door leading into the entry, with his breast heaving convulsively.

Then, with another broken and half-sobbing "God bless you!" he rather reeled than walked out of the room. She heard him at the hat rack at the door, then the closing of the door behind him, followed by the sound of rapidly retreating steps along the garden path, and then, altogether unnerved, she sank into a fauteuil and began to cry.

The widow, however, was only given to tears as a restorative from nervous excitement, and, as they were speedily efficacious in that respect on the present occasion, she very soon recovered herself, and, after closing and refastening the window, and relocking the hall door, sought her couch once more, where, strange as it may seem, she completed her much-broken night's rest in an easier frame of mind that she had begun it upon first retiring. To tell the truth, the business anxiety, already mentioned as disturbing her pretty head at the outset, had become strangely simplified by the subsequent adventure.

Her little housemaid awoke her at the usual hour—8 o'clock—with the accompanying announcement that Chang Foo, her cook and butler, would have her breakfast upon the table in twenty minutes.

"In the meantime, Jenny," said the widow, "run over to the hotel and ask both Mr. Black and Mr. White to come and have breakfast with me."

"Why, they dined with you only last evening, marm!" said Jenny, who, being both pretty and intelligent, was accorded privileges. "Won't it look——"

"I reckon I am rich enough to care very little about looks, Miss Malapert," said the widow, with a wave of the hand, and Jenny skipped away upon her errand.

The widow's real name was Mrs. Jacob Jones. She was still young, being on the right side of thirty at furthest; she was very prepossessing, being blonde, petite, charmingly rounded, with blue eyes, small features, much freshness of complexion, and a generally fascinating expression of good humor and good sense: She was generally known as the Rock Widow from the fact of old Jake Jones, whose death had left her rich and free two years before, having ac-
of the school more than I," said Smith. "You weren't reading a book."

"It is the picture of my late lamented Jones," said the widow, reopening the daguerrotype and tenderly regarding its interior.

"You loved him, then?" exclaimed Smith, huskily. "Oh, how I wish I stood in the dead man's shoes!"

"You do," said the widow, rippling out the merriest little laugh.

"What! How?" cried Smith, wildly, eagerly.

The widow pointed mischievously at his boots.

(Continued on page thirteen,

THE CHICAGO LEDGER
32 YEARS OLD.

Published Every Saturday
—BY—
W. D. BOYCE CO.

All communications should be addressed to
THE CHICAGO LEDGER,
112, 114 DEARBORN ST.,
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

Single subscriptions to the Chicago Ledger by mail $1.00 a year, 50 cents for six months, in advance. If not paid in advance, $2.00 a year, $1.00 for six months. Remittances should be made by Bank Draft, Registered Letter, Post Office or Express Money Order, payable to the Chicago Ledger. One Dollar must be added to all foreign yearly subscriptions to pay postage.

Entered at the post office at Chicago, Illinois, as second-class matter.

THE CHICAGO LEDGER
AND
SATURDAY BLADE.

ADVERTISING.

Advertising rate $1.35 per Agate Line, per insertion, for advertisements in The Chicago Ledger and Saturday Blade.

625,000
COPIES WEEKLY
PROVED CIRCULATION.

BACK NUMBERS.

Back numbers of the Ledger can be had by addressing this office. Always give the numbers desired, plainly written, accompanied by your full address, and your order will receive prompt attention. Price 5 cents per copy.

BEWARE OF STRANGERS.

The Ledger employs no traveling agents to solicit subscriptions, and every person working in that capacity is a fraud. No person is authorized to take subscriptions for the Ledger unless he or she be well known in the city or village where they have been appointed agents to sell this paper every week. A liberal reward will be paid for evidence that will enable us to arrest and convict such persons as are now traveling from town to town in different sections of this country, claiming to be agents of the Ledger and thereby defrauding the people. Beware of strangers.

UNION LABEL

ALLIED PRINTING TRADES UNION LABEL COUNCIL CHICAGO, ILL. 298

Men want the earth, but women are satisfied with a honeymoon.

Things go wrong when they refuse to go your way.

A woman flatters with her eyes; a man with his tongue.

Some people take things as they come and make the worst of them.

Strong drink keeps some men down and helps others to get ahead.

Even when the worm does turn it doesn't create very much excitement.

A man naturally has more warm friends in summer than he has in winter.

It's a pity that we can't insure our pipe dreams before they go up in smoke.

What could St. Louis expect after advertising the Pike as such a strictly moral show?

It's easy for an editor to drop into poetry; all he has to do is to sit down in his waste basket.

Cortelyou and Taggart can think of plenty of plans if others will furnish the money to carry them out.

A campaign in which the vice-presidency furnished the chief issue would be a novelty at all events.

To keep the record straight let it be known that it is pronounced E-so-pus, with the accent on the "so."

Considering the treatment it received at home, it is no wonder the Iowa idea has joined the Democratic party.

Over 300 umbrellas were found in the room of a St. Louis crook. He believed in laying up something for a rainy day.

From the reports, the plank on which the Tammany delegates stand most firmly is the one just in front of the bar.

All New York's passenger boats are to be inspected again. What a fine new lock the stable always has after the horse is stolen!

Grandpa Davis may challenge Fairbanks to a running, riding, shooting, swimming or walking contest to show to the country which is really the younger.

A Chicago woman who has just been loosed from the bonds of matrimony advises girls never to marry men to reform them. However, success in such a venture may depend somewhat on the man—and the woman.

LOVE'S GUILTY DREAM;

OR

THE IDOL OF THE REGIMENT...

—By—
ADRIENNE ROUCOLLE.

[Copyright by W. D. Boyce Co.]

Begun in No. 29, July 16. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE CAUSE OF IRENE'S FRIGHT.

Standing in the middle of the room was a partly nude woman, her long, white hair hanging in tangled masses over her bony shoulders; her eyes alone seemed alive—eyes to which the fire of madness gave a wild and tragic glitter. She stood there trembling with fear, and her heaving bosom and outstretched hands seemed to denote that she feared the blows of some unseen assailant.

After the first moment of terror had passed, Irene resolutely entered the room, followed by the soldiers. At the sight of the visitors the demented woman gave another unearthly cry and backed before them until she leaned against the opposite wall, and there, trembling and white, waited, her eyes full of tragic horror.

"Don't kill me," the livid lips muttered at last. "Don't kill me as Lucien de Lorgnac was killed!"

These words, together with the sound of the voice that pronounced them, caused a cry to escape Irene's lips as she exclaimed:

"Marie here, and oh, so changed! Marie kept captive here while we thought she had run away with the Comte de Lorgnac!"

"Marie is dead," said the woman in the same unearthly voice. "Lucien is dead. He killed him."

But suddenly she paused; a quiver of nameless horror shook her emaciated form; her eyes, enlarged by overpowering fear, gazed toward another part of the apartment.

Irene, wondering at the cause of this sudden terror, looked in the same direction, and there, in an open doorway, which she had not noticed before, stood a man. He was a short, heavy-set and partly deformed creature, with an immense head, small black eyes full of evil glitter, thick lips and a flattened nose. When he saw that he was discovered he advanced into the room, and, bringing his huge hand to his cap, said in a voice whose harsh accents grated painfully on the ear:

"Ah, Mademoiselle, how sorry I am that you should thus discover the terrible secret of my miserable life."

And pointing to the crouched and trembling woman, he exclaimed: "Behold my wife, whom I loved too much to put into an asylum! Monsieur du Terrail gave me the permission to keep her in this part of the castle which, since his mother's death, has not been used by any one."

But the voice of the insane woman broke out again and in the same unconscious accents muttered:

"Lucien de Lorgnac is dead. Marie de Mieux is dead. Pierre killed them."

In the wreck of her reason these words alone seemed to return to her with keen persistence.

Since the entry of the man, Irene had been thinking rapidly; all emotion having passed, her brain was as clear as ever. The insane person was Marie: she had recognized her, not by the face—that would have been impossible—but by her voice, which had not changed. The man's lie was evident, and it was clear that if he were not the guilty one, he was at least an accomplice in the dark drama which must have occurred in this very room some two years before.

The Marquise du Terrail had been accused of running away with Lucien de Lorgnac, yet today she found her again—a prisoner and insane. Monsieur du Terrail was a criminal, but she must have proofs of this before she could have him punished as he merited. These proofs could only be obtained from the insane woman or her jailer.

Resolutely she walked to the door through which the man had passed, closed it, and with her small gun leveled at him, said:

"Not a movement to escape, or I fire!" Then to the soldiers: "Tear those velvet portieres, use them instead of ropes, and bind this man."

Her order was obeyed at once. The man, seeing he was caught, and reading in Irene's eyes that she would give him no quarter, did not try to revolt, but simply said:

"This is a strange adventure, and did I not know Mademoiselle D'Oban I would be tempted to think it was a holdup. As it is, I can only consider it as a joke of a questionable character."

Irene did not deign to reply to this remark, but when they had finished she turned to her brother's orderly, saying:

"Return to Chalons and tell Colonel Deo to come here posthaste with the Major. Then find Raoul, telling him to telegraph to Dr. Charcot, the mental specialist, and to wait until he comes, then bring him here, saying that I have found the Marquise du Terrail, but that she is insane."

Here the man interrupted, with real anguish in his voice, crying:

"Mademoiselle D'Oban, this is carrying the joke too far. I have already told you that this woman is my wife, and you now seem to hint that she is Madame du Terrail, who ran away with the Comte de Lorgnac, and who is now hiding with him in some retired corner."

"Lucien de Lorgnac is dead," broke in the woman; "Marie is dead."

"See," he continued eagerly; "she says that Marie is dead; if she were Madame du Terrail herself she surely would not say that."

Irene, without heeding what he said, turned to Jean, who hesitated, and said:

"Never mind; do as I told you, Jean, and never mind what he says."

The soldier obeyed, and a few moments later the galloping of a horse told them that he was gone. The man now tried to free himself, and curses and entreaties came from his foam-covered lips.

Irene took no more notice of him than if he did not speak, but walked up to the insane woman, who had sunk to the floor, her terrified eyes still fixed on the struggling man, while from her came the ever-repeated sentence:

"Lucien is dead. Marie is dead."

Irene knelt by her side and gently lifted the mass of tangled hair from the ghastly face, and said softly:

"My dear Marie, don't you know me, your friend, Irene, the daughter of the regiment, Raoul's sister?"

"Irene—Raoul!" repeated the woman after her, but her accents showed that these names brought no light to her darkened brain. She did not even look toward the one who spoke to her, but kept her eyes fixed on the man whose presence filled her with unconscious terror.

Irene noticed this and, turning to the soldiers, said: "Boys, take that man into the next room; he frightens this poor girl."

When he was gone a heavy sigh heaved the woman's bosom, and she looked toward Irene, but no light of recognition sprang to her eyes; the friend of her youth was nothing to her now; she knew her not. Yes, Marie du Terrail was still alive, but her intelligence was dead.

Irene tried to make her speak, to force a word of sense from those discolored lips, but all her efforts were vain. Only incoherent words of murder, of blood, of death, were mingled with the ever-repeated sentence that Lucien and Marie were dead. Once in a while as she spoke a sudden spasm would contract her face, and her bony hand would compress the heaving bosom. At last she murmured weakly:

"I am hungry."

Irene shuddered, for part of the truth dawned upon her; they were letting the unfortunate die of hunger. Without an instant's delay she descended, and as the old housekeeper prepared a light lunch for the captive, Irene told her the story of the Marquise's captivity, not heeding the old woman's exclamations of surprise and wonder.

"We find ourselves confronted by a terrible crime. That the Marquis du Terrail has murdered the unfortunate Comte de Lorgnac is clearly established in my mind, but for the sake of justice we must have proof, and to gain this we must see that Monsieur du Terrail does not know that his secret has been discovered. How many servants are at the castle at present?"

"Not many, since my old man he does the garden work, with the help of a boy from the village. Then there's my nephew for stable boy, and my husband's maiden sister to aid me about the house, the general cleaning up being done when Monsieur le Marquis' servants come with him to the castle during the hunting season. That's all, but he's mighty lucky to have that much people to live in this here house where them there ghosts is screaming at all hours of the night. And now to think they be that poor Madame la Marquise! Why, that gives me such a turn that I know I'll be sick for a week getting over it."

Here Irene interrupted her. "As all the servants are honest folks I don't doubt that they will be willing to help me punish the guilty. You'll have nothing to do but be quiet and keep Monsieur du Terrail in ignorance of my visit to the western wing, and the discovery of his secret."

"You may trust me for that, Mademoiselle; we was honest people, we are, and won't move our little finger to save a murderer from the guillotine."

But Irene interrupted him with the sudden question:

"Who is that short, deformed man whom I have captured upstairs and who seemed to keep watch over the Marquise du Terrail?"

"Francois Danton, I judge, from your picture of him. Why, he is an old valet of my master, but for the last two years or so he's living at the castle as a sort of general manager?"

"Was he ever married?"

"Yes, Mademoiselle, and a right good wife he had, too. The poor thing was much too good for the likes of him, and she didn't stand his abuse no long time, for she died when her boy was only ten. I dressed her myself after she died, and I can still see them blue marks his blows had left on her poor body."

"Then you are sure she is dead?"

"Sure! Why, yes, as sure as I am that I is talking to you this minute. I helped place her in the coffin, I watched by her side until they took her to the graveyard, and I even stood by when the coffin was lowered into the grave. So I know she is dead."

"There was no chance of this man Danton taking her out of the coffin, was there?"

The housekeeper's eyes dilated with surprise as she answered.

"No chance whatever, for I never left her from the minute she died until the sexton he threw the dirt over her. But if it was not unrespectful I won't mind your telling me why you ask all them questions."

"For nothing in particular. I simply desired to know, that is all. So I may depend upon you that the Marquis du Terrail shall not know of my visit here today?"

"Not much he will, if I am the one to tell him, and, as I told you before, all the other servants, barring Danton, of course, are honest people and not at all interested that a murderer should escape."

"Very well, I will depend upon your promise," and Irene returned to the western wing with some food for Marie.

When she saw the way the once envied Marquise du Terrail devoured what was being set before her, she was certain that she had guessed rightly, that they were letting her die of hunger. While she was thus watching Marie eat, one of the soldiers entered the room, saying:

"Mademoiselle, the man we captured wishes to see you; he claims that he will confess the truth and tell you all the story regarding the insane lady."

Irene started. Her face lost some of its bright color and her heart throbbed rapidly as she hurried to the next room.

CHAPTER XX.

THE CONFESSION.

When Irene entered the room where Francois Danton was held captive by the soldiers, her face was calm and resolute, and as he saw the firmness of her lips, the virile energy of her dark eyes, he understood that he had to deal with a woman who would brook no falsehood or deceit. If for an instant he had thought to dupe her, that hope vanished at sight of her face and he determined to tell the truth.

Irene took a chair before him, and with her hands clasped in her lap, and her eyes fixed on his, she said:

"I am listening. Only before you begin let me warn you that you must tell me the truth and nothing but the truth; otherwise, I will see that no mercy be granted you."

The man's eyes flashed, for her words gave him the hope that a complete confession might win the indulgence of his judge, so he said somewhat sullenly:

"When I had you called it was because I intended to make a full confession. You guessed rightly when you said that the insane creature in the next room was the Marquise du Terrail."

He paused, but Irene said nothing, since what he had told her did not startle her in the least; from the first she had recognized Marie. So he continued:

"Monsieur du Terrail tired of his wife after the first year of his marriage to her. He made me his confidant in this matter and I was to assist him as I had done before in his life of debauchery."

"Life of debauchery!" broke from Irene with a frown., "Why, the Marquis du Terrail was considered a model young man."

Francois gave a sarcastic laugh as he replied:

"Oh, I know that he was considered perfect, but what I know still better is that he was far from meriting the good opinion people had of him. Monsieur du Terrail is a clever hypocrite and knows how to conceal his game. By nature he is passionate and wild and given to excesses of all sorts, but his hypocrisy was such that he wished to pose as a model of virtue. So, after his parents' death, the servants' foolish belief in ghosts put him on the right track, and he made use of the western wing for his nightly revels. As the Marquis' lady friends were nearly all married women, there was not much danger of the secret leaking out."

"So!" cried Irene, deeply interested, "the night I saw the ghosts it was——" She blushed and hesitated, but Francois finished for her.

"Yes, Mademoiselle, it was Monsieur du Terrail and some lady friend, probably one of the guests in the castle."

Irene uttered an exclamation of disgust, then said: "You may continue your story."

"Well, as I said before, the Marquis du Terrail was tired of his wife, and the little parties in the western wing began anew. All went well until he met the lady he is to marry next week. She was not the kind of woman to accept anything but marriage, and the very hopelessness of his love only served to increase his passion. As to his wife, the indifference he had felt for her now turned to hate since she stood between him and happiness.

"As his love became stronger, and his hate deeper, he decided to find some way to rid ihmself of his wife. With his usual crafty cleverness he formed the plan he so well carried out.

"The afternoon of the ball given at the castle, at the close of the hunting season some two years ago, I was at work near the Japanese summer house when I saw the Marquis, his wife, and the Comte de Lorgnac enter it. For many years I knew that it always pays to listen to people's business, so I drew near and heard Monsieur le Marquis say:

"'There is in this room a door to an underground passage which leads to the castle;

we can take it, and, once within, I will get Mademoiselle Marguerite.'

"At once I understood that something worth seeing was going to take place, since I knew that the passage led to the haunted tower. I followed them, and soon they were all in the room where the late Marquise du Terrail killed herself. As soon as they had entered Monsieur said to them:

"'Wait here; I will get the young lady.'

"After his departure they began to talk, and Madame le Marquise took a chair, while the Comte de Lorgnac stood before her, with his back turned to the door through which the Marquis had disappeared. By his position he hid the door from Marquis du Terrail.

"All at once I saw Monsieur le Marquis return; his face was livid, his eyes wild. He held in his hand a small dagger. He walked cautiously forward, the heavy carpet deadening his footsteps. When he was within three paces of Monsieur de Lorgnac, he raised his arm, and the next minute the dagger was buried to the hilt between the young man's shoulders. A flow of blood came from his mouth, and covered Madame du Terrail's white dress. He staggered two or three steps backward, then, with a gasp, dropped dead at her feet."

"And what did Marie do?" broke from Irene with breathless interest.

"Nothing. She did not utter a cry, but rose in one bound and fixed her terrified eyes on her husband. Her face turned a yellowish white, her nostrils became compressed, while a blue circle formed around the lips; in short, her face took on the mask of death, and, without pronouncing one word, she sank to the floor.

"Monsieur du Terrail had raised his bloody weapon to strike her also, but the minute he saw her fall he threw away his dagger and rushed to her. He felt her heart and saw that it had ceased to beat; then he rose to his feet."

"But she was not dead!" cried Irene, carried away by the excitement of the story.

"No, but he thought she was, which amounted to the same thing. When I saw he was going to leave the room I decided to let him know that his crime had a witness. Knowing him to be in a desperate mood, I took out my revolver, aimed it, and entered the room, saying:

"'One movement and I fire!'

"I never saw a face change as his did when he saw me. It was pale an instant before, but now it took on the hue of death. Still, he did not long remain frightened, for he soon regained his usual assurance and said:

"'I have just avenged my outraged honor; that man was my wife's lover, and I have killed him.'

"I laughed, for I knew that he lied, and I told him I was too clever not to see the falsehood, but that if he paid the price my silence might be purchased."

Here Irene shuddered in disgust; the man saw it and with a sneering smile continued:

"I don't intend to pose for a saint, Mademoiselle. You wanted the truth, and I tell it to you as it is. I never killed, but I was willing to aid those who did to hide the traces of their crimes if they paid me. But to continue, the Marquis understood it would be useless to deceive me. I knew him too well for that, so he said:

"'Well, if I must own it, I had no other excuse to kill yonder wretch than to make the world believe he had run away with my wife, that I might get a divorce. Now, man, how much do you want for your silence and to rid me of those two bodies.'

"I named my price, and though he winced at the sum, he accepted. Being compelled to wait until the next day when the guests at the castle had departed before I could bury the bodies, we returned to the park by the secret passage of the summer house. There we separated, and Monsieur le Marquis returned to the castle to tell his guests that his wife had retired to her room for a few hours' rest."

At that moment one of the soldiers who stood near the window interrupted with the words:

"Mademoiselle, Colonel Deo's victoria is in sight; they will soon be here."

This news changed the course of Irene's thoughts, and she turned to the man with the question:

"How do you enter the underground passage?"

Francois Danton explained the secret door concealed beneath the Japanese matting of the summer house. When he had finished she said:

"Very well; I will have the Colonel and the Major come up that way; you can finish your confession when I return."

With these words she hurried from the room and reached the gate just as the Colonel's victoria paused before it.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE CONFESSION CONTINUED.

After asking the Colonel and the Major to follow her a short distance from the carriage that the driver might not hear what she said, she related her adventure with the ghost and Francois' confession, then she said:

"To capture the Marquis du Terrail we must keep him in ignorance that his crime has been discovered. That is our only chance of getting the needed proofs of his guilt. Though the servants have promised to keep the secret of my presence in the castle should the Marquis arrive before I could have Marie removed, I don't care to tax to too great an extent their power of secrecy, so I think it best that they should be ignorant of your visit. So if you will order your carriage to go to the south gate of the park you can then walk to the summer house where I will meet you and show you the way to the underground passage."

Colonel Deo, in spite of the grave character of Irene's revelation, could not repress a smile at the sight of her flushed cheeks and excited tones, so he remarked:

"How grave is my little madcap today!"

The sorrow on her face deepened at his remark, and gloomily she pointed to the western wing of the castle.

"I have a friend up there—a friend whom I misjudged and thought guilty, when she was only a victim. Yes, in this short half-day I have seen enough of the dark side of life to chase for a while the smile from my lips."

And she returned to the castle without giving him time to answer her remark. Half an hour later they had rejoined her in the summer house, and all three had entered the secret passage. On the way up Irene remarked to the Major:

"I fear you will find Madame du Terrail in a very weak state, Major Leblanc, for the manner in which she devoured the dinner I brought her seemed to indicate that they were letting her die of starvation."

The Major frowned as he questioned: "You surely did not give her a hearty meal, for in her weakened state too much food taken on an empty stomach might have fatal results."

Irene shuddered and for a time did not answer; then, recovering somewhat, she said:

"I don't think I did, for there was not much left from the servants' dinner, and I did not give the housekeeper time to prepare more."

They had reached the top of the stairway by this time, and the next instant had entered the room where Francois was kept captive. They cast but an indifferent look toward the man and hastened at once to the next room where Irene had left Marie. They found her outstretched upon the floor, the pallor of death on her face. At this sight Irene lost her assurance and cried in terrified tones:

"Oh, doctor, she is not dead? Tell me she is not dead!"

Without a word Major Leblanc hurried to Marie, touched her damp brow and listened at the open lips, then answered:

"She is not dead, but it is as I feared—food taken on an empty stomach has produced a swoon. We must put her to bed."

While the Major applied the usual remedies, Irene went below, soon returning with the housekeeper, who carried the needed linen to make up the bed where years before the fated Marquise du Terrail had been laid after her tragic death. Marie was soon lying among the snowy pillows, while the Major, with ever-increasing anxiety, continued to apply the various restoratives that medicine placed in his power. At last he heaved a sigh of relief, for Marie opened her eyes, cast a vague look about her, then closed them again, and was soon breathing like a sleeping person.

The Major turned to Irene and said:

"She is out if immediate danger, but I fear that any attempt to restore her reason would be her death. All the organs are worn out, and it is only by a miracle that she is still alive."

When she saw that Marie had fallen asleep, Irene turned to the doctor and the Colonel and said:

"We may leave her now and finish hearing Francois' confession."

They walked to the next room, leaving the housekeeper in care of the sleeping woman. For the benefit of the two newcomers, Irene had the man repeat his story, then she asked:

"How did it come that Madame du Terrail was not dead as you supposed?"

"I will tell you. I was compelled to wait until the night after the ball before I could think of burying the bodies, for the coming and going of guests would have made it dangerous. So the next night I took a lantern, the servants' belief in ghosts giving me the chance of using a light, and returned to the haunted room. What was my surprise when I entered to find only one body where I had left two. A sudden fear seized me. Madame du Terrail was not dead as we thought; she had escaped and would denounce her husband. At first my only thought was to escape, but a laugh, unearthly and wild, coming from the next room made my hair stand on end, and left me without strength to move.

"As I am not a coward, I soon got the better of my emotion, and walked resolutely to the next room. There stood the Marquise, but not the same woman who, a few days before, had been so well and full of life. She had become the same unconscious creature she is today; even her hair was as white as you see it now. Those hours alone with that corpse, the horror of the scene which had preceded it, had wrecked her reason, which, by the way, had never been very steady.

"At first I thought I would kill her, but on second thought I saw there was more money for me to let her live, so I contented myself by dragging away the body and burying it in the park.

"For a long time I did not know what had become of the Marquis du Terrail, for it was on the night of the ball that he so well carried out the comedy of the outraged husband. He remained away several months hunting for the fugitives, so he told the world. When he returned to France, he had the courage to come back to the castle. He felt it to be necessary, so that he might destroy any doubts which might have come to the minds of his friends. He wanted to show to all that he was not afraid to remain in his home.

"But his life here was one of constant torture. He could not bear the closeness of the apartments, so every morning he would take his horse and for the whole day would ride over the country. People who knew the history of his disgrace pitied the unfortunate man, and no one guessed that it was the remorse of a murderer that thus changed the haughty nobleman.

"Still I did not tell him that his wife was still living. I felt that my secret would be worth more if I waited until he was about to contract a second union, for from the first I had guessed his intentions.

"It was only last week when he came here to say that himself and a number of gentlemen friends would come to the castle Wednesday evening, the eve of his marriage to Lady Hilton, that I told him that his first wife was living. His rage was so great that, had I not been prepared, he would have killed me. After the first anger had subsided he asked me how much I wanted to do the work I should have done two years before.

"I named my price, and of course he accepted, for I had him cornered to such a point that he could not do otherwise. So it was decided that the Marquise would be dead before next Wednesday."

The man's cynic depravity caused Irene to shudder with disgust, and she cried, unable to check her indignation:

"So you had chosen the slow, torturing death of hunger!"

The man gave a sarcastic laugh and answered:

"Well, to tell the truth, Mademoiselle, the thought of bloodshed has no attraction to my rather sensitive soul. Poison leaves dangerous proofs upon the corpse, strangulation shows the signs of the murderer's hands, but starvation leaves nothing behind to show that a crime has been committed."

Irene turned away her head and bit her lips to check the words which rose to them. She had a plan, but to carry it out she must not arouse to too great an extent this man's anger."

"How long have you left the unfortunate Marquise du Terrail without food?" asked the Major.

"This is the second day. I was not in a hurry to accomplish the work, for I knew it would not take her long to die, for she was already very weak and had been on the decline for some time."

Irene turned her flashing eyes toward him and in a voice whose subdued accents revealed her efforts to control her indignation, said:

"The act of which you have been guilty would have been one of monstrous cruelty. You have but one way to make amends, and that is to aid us to punish your guilty master."

The man sneered and answered:

"If in making 'amends,' as you say, I might find an advantage, I am your man. I don't care three straws for my master, and if to aid the police to capture him would in any way better my condition, I'm sure that I am willing to serve you."

Irene was about to reply when Colonel Deo, speaking for the first time, said gravely:

"The capture of the Marquis du Terrail and his conviction for the murder of the Comte de Lorgnac, would lighten to a great extent the weight of your complicity, for from your words you had no hand in his death; and we arrived in time to save the Marquise du Terrail. Thus your only fault lies in having aided a murderer to conceal the traces of his crime; for this you would only receive a few years' imprisonment."

The man's face lighted up with an expression of joy, but the Colonel continued:

"You will only reap these advantages if we are fortunate enough to return yonder unfortunate to reason. You certainly believe that the Marquis du Terrail will deny your version of the story and it will simply be your word against his, and as he has been so successful in concealing his true nature, he might outwit you. The woman you were to murder is the only one who can save you now, provided we can restore her reason."

"How can you hope this, since by the end of next week the Marquis du Terrail will be in Paris with his bride, provided he does not get wind of something and disappear sooner?" asked the man with genuine anxiety in his voice.

It was the Major who replied this time: "Madame du Terrail is near enough to death for us to hope she will have one of those flashes of intelligence which sometimes come to the insane at the hour of death. She cannot live a week, so we have a fair chance of confronting him with her evidence."

Here Irene interrupted: "Then my plan is good. Listen to what I want you to do."

She turned to the man, who looked at her with sudden hope in her eyes. She questioned:

"Have you any relatives living at some distance from here?"

The man hesitated. The expression of his face changed, its cruel lines softened, the eyes beamed with sudden pride, while his form straightened. At last he said in tones which revealed that there was still one tender spot in the callous depths of his heart:

"Yes, Mademoiselle, I have a son," and his voice dwelt with loving tenderness on the word. "He is at the College Louis le Grand and is the brightest boy there, too. He——"

But Irene was in no mood to let him continue, and she interrupted:

"Very well, you must write to the Marquis du Terrail that you have gone to see your son who is ill, and that you have left for his bedside, but that he may rest tranquil, that the work is done and upon your return you will give him the needed proofs. This will give us time to act."

The man listened with thoughtful gravity, then said slowly and with marked reluctance:

"I doubt that the Marquis will credit this, for he knows that I have but little to do with my son."

"Why?" asked Irene with a frown, for she thought the man was lying.

"Ah, that's rather a long story, but the fact is my boy is rather ashamed of me, since he has so many titled friends. I am not much of a gentleman in appearance, and Lionel could never think of presenting me as his father. At first I went to see him anyway, and had him pass me off as his father's steward, but the questionable jokes of his friends about my appearance made me relinquish the pleasure of seeing the lad. I'm not of much good in this world unless it be to furnish money."

The bitter tones of the last words showed that this man who, at first sight, might be supposed to be devoid of all sentiments, did, indeed, worship his son who, to judge from his words, must have repaid him with the basest ingratitude. Still Irene read in this affection the means to make him do her bidding, so she asked:

"You love your son, do you not?"

"Yes," growled the man with savage strength, "and it is to furnish him with the money he craves that I have fallen so low. I nearly killed my wife because she did not want to spoil the boy; I have consented to serve the passions and the vices of my master to conceal his crime, and later to accept the task of murdering yonder woman—all this for his sake, that he might be able to follow in their life of dissipation those titled cads he is so honored to call friends!"

Irene let him speak, for she wanted to know how deep was his love for his son. When he paused she said:

"Then if you love him as you say you do, it is best for you to find a means to explain your absence from the castle when the Marquis du Terrail arrives next Wednesday evening, for if you are condemned as a murderer, you son's position would be destroyed and he would never forgive the one who had forced this shame upon him. He——"

But Francois interrupted her:

"Say no more. I will obey you blindly. Let me write the note; after that you will see if you wish to alter it."

There was a writing desk in the room, and Irene going to it found all that was necessary to write. Francois' hands were freed, and he was aided to the desk. Soon he was busy writing. After a while he looked up and, throwing down his pen, gave the written sheet to Irene, who read it aloud that the others might hear. It read as follows:

"Monsieur le Marquis: I have just completed the work I promised to do, and in the very room. I write to tell you, since by the morning train I must leave for Paris. Lionel is in trouble—a gambling row, which, from his telegram, must be serious.

"I will take the next train, but will try to be back by Wednesday night or Thursday morning at the latest, so that you may have full proofs that all is over. Still, if you see for yourself, just go to the old oak tree in the park; the poor dog is buried there. FRANCOIS DANTON."

When Irene finished reading, and as she placed the letter in the envelope he had prepared, he explained:

"He will understand what I mean by 'dog' and will at the same time consider the letter to be perfectly safe. Now all you will have to do is to have the turf disturbed by the tree, and instruct the servants to say that I took today's train for Paris. The first thing the Marquis will do will be to go to the oak tree and the trampled grass will show him that I have told him the truth this time."

When Francois had finished speaking, Irene gave her instructions. The Colonel, the Major and the prisoner were to return in the victoria while the soldiers were to escort the carriage as far as the villa D'Oban. There Francois was to be kept prisoner until the Marquis had been arrested. Irene and the housekeeper were to remain with Marie until Major Leblanc returned with Dr. Charcot, when he arrived in answer to Raoul's telegram.

The Colonel had objected to leaving Irene alone, but she had firmly replied:

"You can send me Jenny if you wish, but as long as there is a breath in Marie's body I will not leave her side."

And the Colonel had given in, knowing well that nothing could make Irene change her mind when she thought she was doing her duty.

In the Ledger of next week another installment of this charming story will appear. With each subscription to the Ledger we give a free camera or patterns as advertised on pages thirteen and fifteen.

JUST ONE DAY

Free From the Slugger Brought Out a Fact.

"During the time I was a coffee drinker," says an Iowa woman, "I was nervous, had spells with my heart, smothering spells, headache, stomach trouble, liver and kidney trouble. I did not know for years what made me have those spells. I would frequently sink away as though my last hour had come.

"For 27 years I suffered thus and used bottles of medicine enough to set up a drug store—capsules and pills and everything I heard of. Spent lots of money, but I was sick nearly all the time. Sometimes I was so nervous I could not hold a plate in my hands; and other times I thought I would surely die sitting at the table.

"This went on until about two years ago when one day I did not use any coffee and I noticed I was not so nervous and told my husband about it. He had been telling me that it might be the coffee, but I said, 'No, I have been drinking coffee all my life, and it cannot be.' But after this I thought I would try and do without it and drink hot water. I did this for several days, but got tired of the hot water and went to drinking coffee, and as soon as I began coffee again I was nervous again. This proved that it was the coffee that caused my troubles.

"We had tried Postum, but had not made it right and did not like it, but now I decided to give it another trial, so I read the directions on the package carefully and made it after these directions and it was simply delicious, so we quit coffee for good and the results are wonderful. Before, I could not sleep but now I go to bed and sleep sound, am not a bit nervous now, but work hard and can walk miles. Nervous headaches are gone, my heart does not bother me any more like it did and I don't have any of the smothering spells, and, would you believe it? I am getting fat. We drink Postum now and nothing else, and even my husband's headaches have disappeared; we both sleep sound and healthy now, and that's a blessing." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

Look for the book, "The Road to Wellville," in each package.

Pointed Paragraphs.

Egotists haven't much to boast of.

It sometimes happens that wrath discourages a soft answer.

Every man has a hobby, and every woman has two or three.

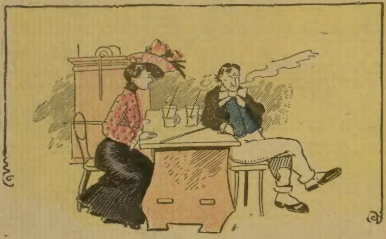
The mule would be all right if he didn't kick at the wrong time.

Many a man after setting up his ideal proceeds to back away from it.

A man's reputation for wisdom depends less on what he really knows than it does on what he doesn't say.

Antics of some society people are calculated to make their ancestors turn in their graves.

IT SHUT THEM UP.



The Comedian—Did you notice the deadly silence in which the audience received my new joke?
The Soubrette—Yes. That wasn't a joke. It must have been a "gag."

Target Practice.

"I just hate to have my husband kiss me," said the bride of six months. "It's such a hit-and-miss performance."

"Why," rejoined her pretty cousin, who had been doing two weeks' visiting, "I never noticed that he missed."

And that evening when hubby returned home he missed the p. c. It had suddenly occurred to her that her mother needed her company.

AGENTS WANTED

Earn a Bicycle taking orders from sample wheel furnished by us. We want an Active Agent in each town. Large profits. Write for special offer.
Highest Grade 1904 Models $8.75 to $17
Coaster Brakes, Hedgethorne Puncture-proof Tires and best equipment.
1902 & 1903 Models, Best Makes $7 to $12
500 Second-Hand Wheels All Makes & Models, good as new $3 to $8
Great Factory Clearing Sale at half factory cost.
We Ship on Approval without a cent deposit, and allow TEN DAYS FREE TRIAL on every bicycle. Any wheel not satisfactory returned at our expense. Write at once for catalogs and our special offer. AUTOMOBILES, TIRES, Sewing Machines, Sundries, etc., half usual prices.
MEAD CYCLE CO., Dept. 52 D Chicago
When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

FREE GOLD WATCH
This watch has a SOLID GOLD LAID ENGRAVED CASE, AMERICAN MOVEMENT, fully warranted to keep correct time; equal in appearance to SOLID GOLD WATCH; guaranteed 25 years. We give it ABSOLUTELY FREE to boys and girls or anyone selling 20 pieces of our handsome jewelry at 10c each. Send us your address and we will send jewelry postpaid; when sold send us $2, and we will POSITIVELY send you the WATCH or FUR SCARF.
EAGLE JEWELRY CO., Dept. 249 CHICAGO.
When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

MEN WANTED!
We have a position open for one good man in each locality, local or travelling, at $840 a year and expenses $2.50 per day, tacking up show cards and generally advertising a New Discovery. No experience necessary. Write for particulars. SALUS MEDICINAL CO., London, Canada
When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

FREE GOLD WATCH!
An American movement watch, fully warranted to keep correct time, in Solid Gold Plated case, equal in appearance to a Gold Filled Watch warranted 20 years, is given FREE to Boys and Girls or anyone for selling 20 pieces of our handsome jewelry at 10 cents each. Send us your address and we will send the jewelry postpaid, when sold send us the $2 and we will positively send you the watch and a chain. BOND JEWELRY CO., Dept. 24 CHICAGO
When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

Do You Want Work?
Ladies or gentlemen. No canvassing or soliciting. No time from your regular occupation. No one need know you are my representative. No money, outfit or experience needed. Easy, permanent, honorable and profitable work that can be done at home. For information, address
J. W. KIDD, 7002 BALTES BLK., FT WAYNE IND
When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

Gold Watch AND RING FREE
An American movement watch with Solid Gold Plated Case, fully warranted to keep correct time, equal in appearance to a Solid Gold Filled Watch warranted 25 years. Also a Solid Rolled Gold Ring set with a rare Cisco Gem, sparkling with the fiery brilliancy of a $50 diamond, are given absolutely Free to Boys & Girls or anyone for selling 20 pieces of our handsome jewelry at 10c each. Order 20 pieces and when sold send us the $2, and we will positively send you both the watch and ring, and a chain. Address:
ERIE MFG. CO., Dept. 57 CHICAGO
When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

PERSONAL to AGENTS
SAMPLE ONLY 15C.
ALUMINUM TEA AND COFFEE STRAINER
is made of one solid piece of aluminum. Has no joints to catch dirt and retain grease. No Kitchen Complete Without One. Light as a feather, beautiful as silver. Won't rust or wear out. Sample only 15 cts.
Agents Wanted. W. C. WATKINS & CO., Box 1505. Pittsburgh, Pa.
When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

Unexpected Happens.

"The coffee that my mother used to make," began the young husband, as he slowly sipped the steaming beverage, "was——"

"Oh, of course," interrupted the bride of a week, who had not read comic journals in vain, "it was the best ever."

"No, my dear," continued hubby, "it was on the bum. I never drank any equal to this."

Whereupon her wifelets promptly fainted.

His Business.

Hiram—Did yew see Bill Skinner when yew was tew th' city, Silas?

Silas—Yep. He's conductorin' on one uv them air street cars.

Hiram—Yew don't tell! Why, he wrote home tew his folks ez heow he wuz in bizness fer hisself.

Silas—I reckin mebby he air, but I 'low th' comp'ny ain't found it out yit.

Undoubtedly.

"They say," remarked the old bachelor, "that women tell more lies than men. Do you believe it?"

"I am not prepared to admit the truth of the assertion," replied the married man, "but if they do it is probably because they talk more."

Pa's Idea of It.

Little Willie—Say, pa, what is the meaning of "carte blanche"?

Pa—"Carte blanche," my son, is synonymous with a man's feelings when he has fifty dollars in his clothes and his wife has gone to the country for a week.

Calling Him Down.

He (at the garden party)—I will always love you, darling. By yon pale moon I swear it. I——

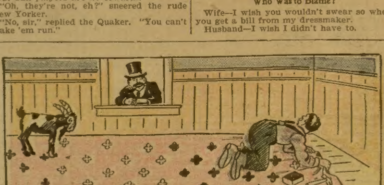
She (interrupting him)—Don't get woozy, George. Yon pale moon is only a Japanese lantern.

They Stand Pat.

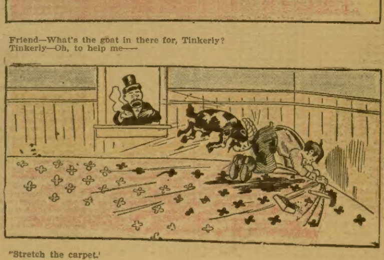
"Anyway," said the Philadelphia man, "our ball players are no cowards."

"Oh, they're not, eh?" sneered the rude New Yorker.

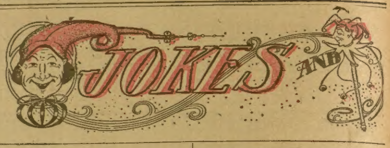
"No, sir," replied the Quaker. "You can't make 'em run."



Friend—What's the goat in there for, Tinkerly?
Tinkerly—Oh, to help me——



"Stretch the carpet."



Collecting Material.

The Lady—Oh, my poor man, I am so sorry to see you dissipating! Didn't you tell me you were going to an experience meeting and tell what a sinner you were twenty years ago?

Gritty George—Yes, mum.

The Lady—When are you going?

Gritty George—Twenty years from now, mum.

That Tired Feeling.

Mifkins—Newpop never seems to tire of repeating the smart things his boy says.

Bifkins—Of course not. It's a matter of business with him.

Mifkins—Matter of business?

Bifkins—Yes; he has the agency for a compound that is supposed to cure "that tired feeling," and it's up to him to create a demand for it. See?

Leap-Year Maid.

"But as he never said he would marry you," remarked the widow, "I fail to see where the breach of promise comes in."

"When I proposed to him," explained the leap-year maid, "he promised to be a brother to me, and he hasn't been anything of the kind."

Better Than Nothing.

"Any game around here?" asked the city sportsman.

"Goin' ter be a game uv baseball back uv th' village graveyard this afternoon," replied the native.

"Good!" exclaimed the c. s. "I'll stay and take a shot at the umpire."

Satisfactory.

"I have given your proposal due consideration," said the fair maid, "and have made up my mind not to marry you, after all."

"That's right, my dear," replied the young man in the parlor scene. "Marry me first and the others one at a time after we are divorced."

Possible Explanation.

Miles—There is said to be a race of savages in Africa whose vocabulary consists of but eight words.

Giles—What! Do you mean to say there are no females among them?

Hereditary.

"I hear," said the friend of the family, "that your son is sowing wild oats broadcast since he went to the city."

"Takes arter his ole dad, I reckon," replied old man Corntossel. "Th' farmer in him air bound tew crop out, by hen!"

It Would Seem So.

"Truth," remarked the moralizer, "is stranger than fiction."

"Yes," rejoined the demoralizer, "and the majority of men seem to be shy of associating with strangers."

Who Was to Blame?

Wife—I wish you wouldn't swear so when you get a bill from my dressmaker.

Husband—I wish I didn't have to.

A Wonderful Chance for Live Men Everywhere.

If there are any of the readers of this paper who would be interested in a clean, legitimate, high class proposition that will earn for them anywhere from $20.00 to $50.00 per week, please ask them to cut this notice out and mail it to us. We will send them full particulars of our offer which is very unusual and will appeal to ambitious men everywhere. No matter what your present occupation may be, it will pay you to investigate our offer. This is no cheap fake or unreliable proposition, we do not offer something for nothing; we have no extravagant claims to make, we don't want to sell you an "outfit," but the proposition we have for an energetic, ambitious man who is willing to give a fair measure of work for good pay, better than he could earn at almost anything else, is such that we advise every man to write us. Our proposition cannot be satisfactorily presented in a small notice, but if you are interested, want to improve your present position and get into a high class paying business, don't hesitate, but cut this notice out and mail to us today with your name and address. Address
AMERICAN WOOLEN MILLS COMPANY,
Washington Blvd. and Union St., Chicago, Ill.

An Unfair Advantage.

The Czar—Why did you lose that battle?

General Zolticoff—The Japanese attacked us in our rear.

"I was informed that they attacked you in front."

"Y-e-s, but that was our rear when they got there."

Unusual Sight.

Gunner—These department stores are pretty complete in every way.

Guyer—They are, indeed. I saw a barber shop in one.

Gunner—You don't mean it?

Guyer—Yes, for a fact. His wife was sick and he was buying some bargains for her.

Very Popular.

City Nephew—So a rural trolley line has started out in your county! Is it very popular with the residents?

Uncle Sile—Wal, I should say so. The cars carry potatoes and cabbage an' the conductors can talk anything from eggs to horse trading.

Correct Name.

Gunner—In some of the uncivilized countries when the women do up clothes they call it "mangling."

Guyer—Well, the American laundries do a lot of "mangling," but they don't call it that.

Good Example.

"Yes," related the marine artist, "a lighthouse and a storm often go together."

"They do, indeed," replied the actor. "When our manager peers through the curtain and sees a light house there is always a storm in the box office."

Fixing the Blame.

He—Miss Buddington is awfully shy, isn't she?

She—Yes. I wonder if she inherits her shyness from her mother?

He—No; from her father, I imagine. He used to be a great poker player.

Usual Way.

Newpop—Our baby is awfully fond of me.

Neibhbors—Oh, of course.

Newpop—Fact. Why, the little beggar sleeps all day while I am downtown and stays awake all night for the sole purpose of enjoying my society.

How He Got It.

De Bore—How did you catch your cold?

De Bristle—You know colds are contagious?

"Yes."

"Well, I caught it asking other people how they caught their colds."

Feminine Idea.

Mrs. Hayrix—Them air Japs must be kinder hard up fer somethin' tew read.

Hayrix—Why so, Mandy?

Mrs. Hayrix—This paper says they went an' took a lot uv Russian magazines.

Asked and Answered.

"What is a seraphim?" asked the inquisitive boarder.

"A seraphim," explained the cheerful idiot, "is a male seraph. The female is called a serapher. See?"

Never Touched Him

"What month of the year do you consider the luckiest to be married in?" asked the fair leap-year maid.

"The thirteenth," promptly replied the old bachelor.

Cut Him Short.

"I am limited in funds," said the client "and I hope you'll let me down easy."

"Let you down easy?" replied the divorce lawyer, coldly. "Do you think I am an elevator boy?"

In for a Long Rest.

The Maid—Of the men of your acquaintance who have married, which do you think are the happiest?

Bachelor—The dead ones.

A LIMIT

One Thing Food Can't Do.

Food can't exactly paint a picture, but proper food to restore the daily wear and tear on brain and nerves as well as body can help. A successful artist says:

"I had been troubled with dyspepsia for 25 years and my system was so run down I was so weak and miserable life was a burden to me until I made a great discovery about food.

"I am an artist by profession and at that time was painting a large marine piece, but being in such poor health I could not do justice to it and no matter how often I changed it there seemed always something wrong. Success lay just out of my reach because I did not have the strength and vigor of brain as well as bodily strength to accomplish what I knew lay within me.

"Looking around me for help I decided to try a food I had heard so much about, and that was the way I was led to use Grape-Nuts, and it came at the right time. I had hardly given it a fair trial before I began to feel so much better, my dyspepsia disappeared and I commenced to feel stronger and more vigorous all over, head and all, and it was not long before I was back at my work again with renewed energy and interest.

"Even more substantial proof of the help I got from this food was when I finished my painting and put it up for exhibition. Critics said it was a masterpiece and I sold it a short time ago at a very good price. Before closing I want to mention the fact that my mother, in her 85th year, keeps strong and in fine spirits on Grape-Nuts." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

"Get the little book, "The Road to Wellville," in each package.

Nothing Common.

His Wife—I hear that your new patient is very rich.

Physician—'Sh! He is so rich that I gave the mustard plaster I placed on his back a Latin name.

Shutting Him Off.

Newpop—I have an unusually smart little boy.

Nagsby—Yes, so I've been told.

Newpop (flattered)—Ah, who told you?

Nagsby—You did a moment ago.

Nothing Out.

Stubb—Why do you always give that waiter such a small tip as a nickel? You might know he will toss it back to you.

Penn—That's what I want him to do.

A Good Catch.

Mamma—I'd hate to think that you would throw yourself at young Shortstop.

Daughter—I don't see why. He's the best catch on the local ball team.

Real Agitators.

"Is it true," asked the English vaudeville actress, "that there are people in America who really desire the elevation of the stage?"

"Yes," replied the man from across the pond, "the gallery gods."

Herb Teas.

"Back to town, eh? I hear you were very ill down at your mother's on the farm."

"Yes, and I had a narrow escape."

"From the fever?"

"No; from some of those old-fashioned remedies."

Knew His Business.

Romantic Rosalie (at the reception)—That young man over by the piano is just too killing for anything.

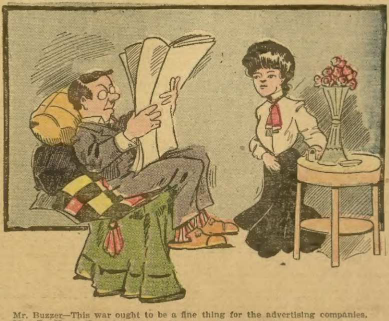
Practical Pauline—Sure he is. He owns a big slaughter house in Omaha.

Her Mission.

Mrs. Homer—I suppose your daughter is attending cooking school so she will be able to do her own cooking after her marriage?

Mrs. Uppson—Oh, my, no! She is going to write a cook book.

SIMPLY A MINE



Mr. Buzzer—This war ought to be a fine thing for the advertising companies.
Mrs. B.—How so?
Mr. B.—Why, think of the new names for breakfast food on the Russian map.

After Midnight.

Wife—I'm sorry to see you come home in such a state as this, Charles.

Husband—I knew you'd be sorry, Carrie, and that's why I told you not to sit up.

About the Size of It.

When into life's mysteries you delve,
The chances are you'll discover
That the small faults you have yourself
Are the big ones you see in another.

His Specialty.

Mrs. Neighbors—Did I understand you to say that your husband plays the piano?

Mrs. Longshot—No, indeed! The only thing he plays is the races.

Her Only Hope.

A young lady who called herself "Mae,"
Talked a lot, but had nothing to sae;
And the other girls said
If she did chance to waid,
Her husband would be a rank jae.

Peep Into the Future.

"I demand recognition!" screamed the delegatess from the 'steenth district.

"Impossible," rejoined the chairlady of the convention. "The female from the 'steenth district is not in our set."

Feminine Way.

"Have you read that new novel everybody is talking about?" asked the first dear girl.

"Only the last chapter," replied dear girl the second. "I wonder how it begins?"

No Room for Doubt.

Short—I'm one of those chaps who don't believe in doing things by halves.

Long—Yes; I've noticed that you never try to make a touch for less than a dollar.

Undoubtedly.

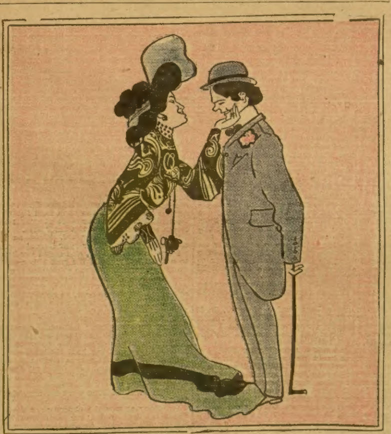
"I believe," said the minister, "that every man has his secret sorrow."

"Sure," rejoined the doctor. "Even the man who is outwardly happy has a skeleton in his midst."

What He Had.

Young Lady (in bookstore)—Have you "Viri Romae"?

New Clerk (with bandaged hand)—Oh, no; the doctor says it's only a boil.



Mrs. Stubb—John, did you take that tramp cat away and try to lose him today?
Mr. Stubb—Yes, Maria, and I really feel encouraged.
Mrs. Stubb (eagerly)—Then you lost him?
Mr. Stubb—Not quite; but for the first time I succeeded in returning home before he did.

AGENTS WANTED

Let Us Start You in Business

No Money or Experience Necessary
We Furnish That

We want to make a clothing salesman out of you. We can do it without you paying a cent for the instructions. You become our representative immediately, with an income at once. We train you while you are our representative—while you are working, and your income commences when you start to work.

We are the largest tailoring house in the world making made-to-measure garments, turning out better goods for less money than our competitors. We will make business for you by turning out the best made to order suits, coats and trousers—making it easy for you to take orders and keep your customers. The ordinary representative makes not less than

$1,200 a year. Others, $2,000.

If you are situated so that you can only spare a little time each day in writing letters or calling on your friends, we shall be glad to hear from you. Some are making from $10 to $25 a week doing this.

Write at once before your territory is taken by some one else.

Great Western Tailoring Company,
151 Fifth Avenue. Chicago.

When Writing Mention The Chicgao Ledger.

LEARN to make Mirrors and make big money at home Partic. for stamp. MacMasters, D36, Peru, Ind

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

STARK TREES best by Test—78 YEARS. We WANT MORE SALESMEN PAY CASH Weekly Stark Nursery, Louisiana, Mo.; Dansville, N. Y.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

$35 A WEEK AND EXPENSES to men with rigs to introduce our Poultry Goods. JAVELLE MFG. CO., Dept. 29, Parsons, Kan

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

$25 PER WEEK and Traveling Expenses paid salesmen to sell goods to grocery dealers; experience unnecessary. Purity B. C. Co., Chicago

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

AGENTS WANTED! Sell our $1 bottle Sarsaparilla for 35c; best seller; 200 per cent profit; write to-day for terms and territory. F. R. GREENE, 115 Lake St., CHICAGO

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

AGENTS WANTED in every county to sell the Transparent Handle Pocket Knife. Good commission paid. From $75 to $300 a month can be made. Write for terms. Novelty Cutlery Co., No. 23 Bar St., Canton, O.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

YOU CAN MAKE $3 TO $10 A DAY Fitting glasses for us. Big profits. Our 24-page FREE EYE BOOK tells how. Write for it today.
JACKSONIAN OPTICAL COLLEGE, Dept. L 20, JACKSON, MICH.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

DETECTIVE Can you spare part of your time for profitable detective work? No experience needed. Write American Detective Ass'n, Indianapolis, Ind.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

CLEAN CUT CAKE TIN FREE TO AGENTS Flat thin knife cuts loose a perfect cake. $2 Outfit free Exp. prepaid. Dept. A L
HOUSEHOLD NOVELTY WORKS, Chicago, Ill., or Buffalo, N. Y.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

DETECTIVE DO YOU WANT TO BE ONE! We will send you our personal practical course on ten days trial free. Write for it at once. Devereux and Sutherland Detective Agency, Hartford Building, CHICAGO

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

$3 a Day Sure Send us your address and we will show you how to make $3 a day absolutely sure; we furnish the work and teach you free, you work in the locality where you live. Send us your address and we will explain the business fully, remember we guarantee a clear profit of $3 for every day's work, absolutely sure. Write at once. ROYAL MANUFACTURING CO., Box 1101. Detroit, Mich.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

STEM SET STEM WIND FREE Gold WATCH We give this MODERN AMERICAN MOVEMENT watch, fully warranted to keep CORRECT time, FREE to boys and girls or anyone, selling 24 pieces handsome Jewelry at 10c. each. The Case is SOLID GOLD PLATED, equal in appearance to Solid Gold Watch, guaranteed 25 years. Write today and we send jewelry postpaid. When sold send us the $2.40 and the Watch and Chain are POSITIVELY sent you by return mail.
U. S. MFG. CO.
Dept. 21 258 Roscoe Street, CHICAGO, ILL.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

BIG MAIL FREE!

POST OFFICE

Would you like to get a lot of letters, circulars and packages? You probably know that manufacturers supply houses, wholesalers and publishers buy names and addresses for the purpose of sending samples, advertising matter, papers and circulars to. Good names and addresses are hard to get and are quite expensive. We publish an Agents' Directory List containing names and addresses carefully arranged in alphabetical order. We send these Directory Lists to concerns we know are anxious for good names to send advertising matter to. Write your name very plainly so the printer will not make a mistake; be sure to give your street number and town also plainly written so that any mail addressed to you will reach you without fail. We have been publishing the Agents' Directory List for several years and refer to the editor of this paper who will tell you we are reliable. All we ask is that you send 10 cents in silver and we will enter your name in our Agents' Directory List as above stated. Write today. Address

AGENTS' DIRECTORY LIST,
INDIANA INDIANA COUNTY. PA.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger. When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

AUNTIE'S PEARLS.

Nellie was always pleased by an invitation to sit on Aunt Berta's lap. Sometimes she climbed up without being asked, and then what dread for fear mamma would say:

"You are too heavy for auntie, Nellie. Run, play—there's a dear."

Mother was away from home the last time Auntie Berta called, and Nellie sat on her aunt's lap a long time. She made herself look beautiful, she said, by trying on auntie's jewels. The rings were large enough for the little girl's thumbs, and the bracelets fell over her hands when hung down, so auntie said she must remain where she was if she wished to play with the pretty ornaments.

"Be right still, dear, and I'll tell you the story of that big pearl. You have often heard that these lovely gems are found in certain shells, most of them in the oyster, at the bottom of the sea. They come from pearl fisheries that supplied the ancients with their lustrous and lavish pearl ornaments. Even in the very earlist days pearls were valued highly. All the princes and princesses delighted in their decoration, and Roman ladies wore three or four in each ear, besides having their garments trimmed with them in great numbers. To provide a costly feast once, and prove her wealth, a queen of Egypt, as you will often hear, dissolved a pearl in vinegar and drank it. Indeed, the luxurious often drank pearls in those ancient times."

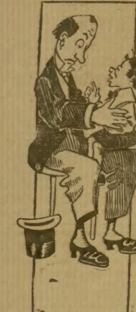
"Seems to me, auntie," interrupted Nellie, "excuse me, but it seems to me that even the lovely pearls could not make vinegar sweet enough to be nice. How do the pearls get into the oyster shells, auntie?"

"It is supposed that they grow there. No one knows all about the subject. If you look at the inside of some shells, yuu will find them coated with a substance of a bluish-white and sometimes a yellowish-white color. This coating is really mother of pearl. It is called this because from it are produced the round pearls of the jeweler. They are sometimes like little pills and sometimes as large as marbles. They are often attached to the coating of the shell, although they are found loose inside as well. Off the coast of Australia and the islands are rich pearl fisheries, but more gems come from the coral banks of the Island of Ceylon and the Persian Gulf.

"But the most interesting part of their story is about the diving. At the firing of a signal gun, boats set sail for the fisheries at night so as to be ready for diving at sunrise. Each boat has ten rowers and ten divers, and the divers take turns in going to the bottom of the sea. They go fearlessly, although horrible sharks prowl there, and to hasten their descent use large stones. They carry nets in which the oysters are placed, and when the nets are filled the men signal by pulling a rope to be drawn up by their companions in the boats.

"You will believe that divers work very quickly when you know the best can remain under such depths of water only a minute and a half at most, and even then the water pours from their mouths and ears and nostrils; sometimes even blood bursts from the swollen organs when they rise again to the surface. But the divers love their work and grow to like the battles with the huge sharks. Sticks pointed at both ends are the weapons with which they war with the terrible creatures, and there is many a conflict, we are told."

Uneasy.



Visitor—Why do you tremble, my lad?

Willie—I don't feel quite safe. I heard pa say you were an old shark.

Just a Scheme.

Mrs. Gaussip—I think you ought to know this, Mrs. Subbubs. Your husband kisses your cook!

Mrs. Subbubs—Yes, I told him to do it. You see, the cook thinks she is getting ahead of me in that way and so she never thinks of leaving.

Equal to the Occasion.

Domestic—O, please, mum, what shall I do? Half the soup is spilt, and the boarders is at the table.

Mrs. Slimdiet (firmly)—Empty the box of red pepper into what's left. There will be enough then.

IN MASQUERADE

OR

The Luck of a Free Lance

By WILLIAM R. EYSTER.

[Copyright by W. D. Boyce Co.]
Begun in No. 27, July 2. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER XXIV.

BETRAYED.

If I could only have seen my way to do it I should have omitted Ramon altogether. He was the man of all others for a guide, and I never for a moment doubted his loyalty and courage. Still, there was a likelihood of his being recognized, and the cause of his presence suspected; in which case discredit would of course be brought on me.

For myself, I had little fear of attracting unfavorable attention, were I boldly to take up quarters in the city. I was no longer O'Rourke, either of the irregular or of domestic service. I was once more, so far as I could restore myself, the Algernon Mount Morris of a few weeks ago. I believed that were I to come face to face with Mrs. Marchmont herself I would not be recognized. That such a meeting might occur was one of the contingencies I had contemplated; and the possibility of its occurrence strengthened my distaste for the society of the worthy gambusino.

However, that was neither here nor there, so long as I had to have him. He knew Quezaltepec and its surroundings as well as I knew the town I was born in; and from prisons to palaces, from convent to dancehouse, no matter what place I wanted to find, he could point it out.

Before starting I apprised him of the ground I wished to see, so there would be no need of mention when we were where we might be overheard. Of course, he knew all about what was to be done, and had shrewd suggestions of his own to make; but he showed no more than a desire to act the part he had been called upon to play. We set out together, and as we went along I took in the nature of the country over which I might soon be called on to make a retreat. Do not think I was in the least inclined to treat this expedition as a joke, or trust all to luck. Finnicune himself could not have been more careful; and if I say it myself he could not have shown a better realization of the duties of a partisan leader.

Soldiers must be born aright before they can possibly be made. Probably I had been born with the martial bent in me.

I looked over Quezaltepec with a strategic eye and shook my head. What numbers might be quickly concentrated against us I did not know. The national army all told barely mustered five thousand men; but there were some thirty or forty thousand militia in a state of semi-organization. If, as I suspected, the President had some knowledge of what might be afoot, it was possible that he could bring here a force at short notice that could make it very uncomfortable for the five hundred who might capture the town by a coup de main, and try to hold it.

As for the fortress, or prison, for it was as much like one as the other, and more like an old monastery or convent than either, I had not so much doubt about that, especially as we were to receive aid from within. If we could once get a footing there without bringing every man to the front against us, I thought my hundred and I could answer for the rest. Of course, the work would have to be carried through with a dash unless we were willing to call out the five hundred and raise the flag of revolution in earnest.

I did not think much over the possibility of failure. I knew what that meant well enough, and it was not a happy theme to dwell upon. I did wonder whether, in case of capture, Mrs. Marchmont and I would together splash the same wall with our blood; whether the execution would be public or private; whether success was going to make out of the danger a profit. If I had not sternly resolved there should be no more of them, my wits would have led he along through a dozen or a score more of such cheerful questions.

Ramon would no doubt have been glad to enliven the tour with his chatter, but I signed to him more than once for silence. I had my own thoughts to look after and could not be disturbed. I knew now the place of rendezvous, the point of attack, and the way of retreat. Also the salient points of the town. I was done with him for the preeent.

"Return to Jussac and say I will meet him in the morning. If I am delayed let nothing interfere with his moving promptly as planned. If living I will join the command. If dead my duty falls to him. Go!"

Hardly knowing why, I had decided to remain the night at Quezaltepec. I think it was because, in my heart, I hoped I might learn something more of Mrs. Marchmont.

I knew where to look for Don Domingo's estanchia, and as the Don had been profuse in his invitations to take possession of his ranch and all that it contained—in other words, to be his guest until the time came for action—I was not sure but that I would, in a measure, take him at his word. First, however, I wanted to fix a headquarters more comfortable than in the saddle. Even on that, Ramon had given me a pointer, and I boldly made my way to a hostelry, where I received such greeting as a traveler might expect.

There I made myself much at home, and from the way I settled down my host might have thought I had come for a year's stay. He had met Americans before—I soon learned that, and that he even knew a few words of their lingo. I sprawled myself out after the fashion he had seen, and later on ate supper with deliberate relish. I even tried to forget for a little that I was no better than a spy, and the rope might be waiting for me. In some way I managed to pass a couple of hours in aparent ease. If I listened to such comment on current events as the frequenters of the place chose to make it was without anxiety, though it may have been I instinctively expected to hear some rumor exploited of the work I had on hand.

Nothing of the kind. Quezaltepec was in blissful ignorance of the coming revolution. I doubted if any news of the fight at the defile had reached the city. Surely, if it had there would have been no keeping it secret. Those wao had no guide to its meaning would have been airing their views on the story which would have been running from mouth to mouth. Still uncertain of what I was to do I strolled out into the shadows of the dimly-lighted streets. Night had come down, and the moon had not yet risen.

I confess I was all at sea. I began to wonder why I had remained behind. It was a senseless risk, for now that I had taken it there was no earthly object I could think of to be gained. Here I was, alone in the city, not even in communication with my friends. I was thinking thus, and almost cursing myself for a blunderer and a foolhardy Quixotte, when I heard a cautious whisper.

"Senor!"

I recognized the voice in that one word, and turned swiftly.

"Joaquin!"

It was in reality the only rank blunder I had made in assuming the role of the man military, but as it turned out it was a fortunate one. The man was so far in doubt that had I, fearing a trap, gone on and waited for some more certain sign he would have given me up altogether. As it was, my prompt recognition made him sure; whereas, he had before only suspected.

"Seem to pay no attention, but follow to where I can have a word with you. I fear we are betrayed."

I imagined the whole case as it was before I had time to answer. I was holding my life in my hand; and I will not deny that my heart was in my mouth. Nevertheless, I followed with a careless air, and when at last he was ready to speak with me I had discounted his news.

"And so, Ramon is a traitor?"

"If I mistake not. You two I saw together, and would not have recognized your excellency had it not been that watching him I saw whither he led you. What orders had he at parting?"

"To return to camp and make report to Jussac. I saw him start."

"But he came back. I watched him, for there are more throats at stake than one in this thing. Had it not been he was slow in getting to those in authority you would have heard from him before this. If there be not visitors seeking thee at the place just left it is a wonder. Now, what is to be done? Speak quickly, for there is scant time, and many are to be warned."

I did not hesitate an instant.

"Go at once to Don Domingo, and tell him of what you have seen. Above all, see that Mrs. Marchmont is warned. I did not pick the scoundrel. Say to Domingo for me that if the attack is to be made it were as well done tonight as ever. Let him warn those who were with me today, and have such picked men as he can rely on at the meeting place agreed on as the clock strikes one this very night. Meanwhile, let him hide. Our gathering then will be safe because unexpected. Ramon can give no hint; and that will be the last place to search for us. I ride for Jussac and the comrades. Seven miles out, seven miles in; and an hour to spare. Then comes the shock that will be heard from here to hades."

There was nothing difficult to remember, or that needed repeating. He answered promptly:

"Thou art a born leader of men. So it shall be. But it will not be safe to return for the horse. Come with me and I will provide a better as I take my own. By the saints, we'll foil the traitor yet."

We waited not a second after that, but made what haste we could to get into the saddle. I would rather Joaquin should have ridden for Jussac and I myself carried the warning to Mrs. Marchmont and the Don; but Jussac might refuse to come for him, and I knew the way to our camp better than that to Don Domingo's. Moving cautiously at the first, before long I was riding at a good hard gallop for the lurking place of my compatriots.

Ah, that seven miles! It lay before me like a nightmare, since it had to be doubled to be ready for work at the fortress when the hour struck one; and I, riding over a strange road, on a stranger steed, was responsible for it all. My blood was stirred as it had never been, even in the fights at the defile, and the perspiration oozed from me as I tore along. I was a fair judge of pace and time, and knew I had something to spare of the hour I had given myself to make the run. To tell the truth, I had nursed a haunting if ridiculous fear that I would find our camp in the hands of the enemy.

I rushed into the presence of Jussac as though Baridos and his whole army might be behind. In a few words I told him of the defection of Ramon, as witnessed by Joaquin, which his absence here confirmed, and then gave my orders for the night.

Jussac was my man among a thousand. He never offered an objection. Indeed, my plan would have been his had I waited.

"If Domingo has arranged for the gates to be opened tonignt, well and good. If not, we blow them down with a bomb, put the garrison to the sword of they prefer to die fighting, find Gonzales, ride over the scum which may get in our way, and before morning place forty miles between us and Quezaltepec. Let them follow if they dare. We know our brethren in arms, and to tell the truth I care little whether Domingo joins us or not, and would sooner the woman were well out of it."

Surely, the man was a Gascon, for he fougnt bravely as he talked.

I put myself inside of uniform once more, and lay down to think and to rest while Jussac made ready for the march. In half an hour I was again on the road; but this time not alone.

There was a contingency I had not thought of, but which gave me little trouble. Of course, Ramon would have told all the secrets of our camp; but I believed the enemy would be loth to move on it until I was found, and a couple of hours might well be lost searching for me through the town, or at San Domingo's. Presently, however, I intended to make a slight detour, so as to probably avoid any force coming out from the city. I reckoned I would still have twenty minutes to spare to get from the rendezvous to the point of attack, and in the end it would be the more convenient route by which to reach the spot we were aiming for.

I could not have laid nor timed my plans better. We did indeed, as we afterward learned, outflank a party of soldiers moving toward our camp; and as the stroke of the bell chimed one I was clasping Don Domingo's hand and staring over the dark-looking, shadowy forms grouped behind him.

If I looked at Mrs. Marchmont I was not disappointed. She came forward to give my hand a warm clasp.

"Ah, my gallant friend, I owe you more than I ever can repay. Without you, this night we all would have been lost. What hangs on our success you may understand when I tell you that side by side with Don Gonzales I hope to find the unjustly imprisoned husband from whom I have been separated so long. I had believed him dead; but if I mistake not he is to be restored to the land of the living and to me. Go on, now. I am burning with impatience. If you fail me I die indeed."

It was as well she had something to add after the shock of her revelation. For a moment I was all abroad, with a cold chill running up and down my back, and my pulse in a quiver. Then I wrung her hand and turned away as from a dead idol.

Domingo was waiting, and his fifty men he had brought stood like statues. Hastily I told our plan, just about like Jussac had outlined it to me. There was no time to reorganize. My twelve held together under Jussac, Domingo—with whom rode Mrs. Marchmont—and his men following.

In this way we went boldly and without a care until within a stone's throw of the gates.

Lo! they were open, with a troop of men just filing out.

CHAPTER XXV.

HOW WE TOOK QUEZALTEPEC.

In the desperate venture we had decided on, nothing could better have suited our hand. Assured that for tonight we were skulkers, scattered, things of the dark, foolhardy bravos who would win by surprise and by striking only when not expected, the enemy deemed they would be the surprisers. One by one, we and the men who were to share with us in the uprising, should be hunted out and captured. All thought that there might be defense on our part was absent. Only offense was to be in the saddle that night; and their every post was to be stripped of almost its last man to crush out the movement before it was fairly born. Ramon's revelation had served us better than he could have dreamed, since Joaquin had put us on our guard. It had unclosed the gates we had expected to force, and thrown before us in the open field the men we had thought to face with ramparts between us, and they on the inner side.

"Steady, and not a word. Keep on till the order. Then, on for your lives!"

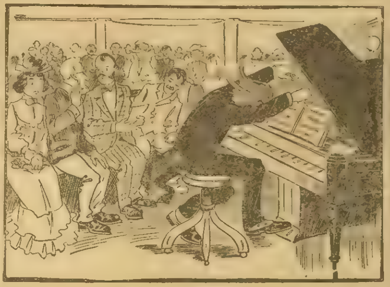
I was in the advance, and urged my horse to a little faster pace, the gait being taken up by the rest. They were even wise enough to straggle a trifle, as though this might be a band coming in with news, welcome or otherwise. We were seen, no doubt, but deliberation probably won us a few dozen yards; and that was all we needed.

"Sabres! Forward! Strike in!"

Short the commands; but well were they understood. While the force at the gate outnumbered my own little command, I knew, if we could but hold the way open a moment or two, Domingo and his men would be with us and bear down all opposition. I even heard their yell before our tiny squadron struck the enemy.

Faith! We left little work for our friends to do.

Headlong as was the charge over the few yards we had to go, my men held their horses well in hand, and at the proper moment checked them, else more than one had dashed against the stone wall on either side of the gates. There were a few straggling shots, but the rout was more sudden and complete than in either of our other battles. The first thought on the part of the foe was to get behind the shelter of the walls, and



"He plays with great abandon."
"Yes. Let's abandon him."

the most of them did get within the patio; but we entered with them.

Jussac and I split between several of the fugitives; and my men followed two by two, cutting right and left. Heavens! how the swords rang; how the mob scattered around the court like sheep; and how Domingo's men came pouring in behind us, on foot. The place was ours without a respectable struggle.

Mrs. Marchmont was not with the first flight, but she and the Don were close behind. They came to me as I was giving orders for the third man to take the horses and the rest to follow.

"This way," he shouted, pointing at the door of the main building itself, which frowned not far away. "My men will take care of the outside; you and yours I want within."

Almost at the same moment he gave a peculiar rap on the door, which, strange to say, flew open with scant delay

At once a dozen of us swarmed in.

Domingo's sword was at the breast of one we found there; but I guessed, or could see, his threatening words were but a blind. The fellow as willing enough to show us the way, and even to point out anything we might overlook. He told us plainly we wanted to lose no time in securing the object of our quest. It happened well for us that the confusion of the suddenly ordered movements, and the secret work of our friend within the gates, had left all the inside as at other times it could seldom be found. We made our way forward with little delay and less opposition. Men were cut down, but after the experiences of the last few nights that seemed a small matter. Other men within the prison were nothing to us, here nor there. We sought Gonzales—and Gonzales we found

As his companion we found another, of ragged clothes and haggard loks, who stared at us as sword in hand we swarmed into the room, and pushed off with weary suspicion the seeming youth who tried to fling his arms around his neck in the speechless embrace of joy.

"You fool, you!" I shouted. "Don't you see—it is your wife!"

Then there was a jubilee, and I stood back, gnawing at my mustache while a few words of greeting and the like were said, and Mrs. Marchmont and Domingo explained the situation. It all took but a moment, yet no scene ever comes back to me more vividly—the bare, stone-walled room, the flare of the lights which made the gloom more visible, the armed men, Gonzales bright with the fire of hope, Marchmont and his wife in each other's arms; and I, standing like a hero, and feeling like a fool.

This was all very interesting, but I could not allow it to go on indefinitely. With less than a hundred we might start a revolution, to be sure, but unless I was much mistaken it would not be long before a force would be concentrated against us which it would be useless to try to resist. Mariano had counseled, even ordered, instant flight; and I had no humor to ruin success by disobedience to orders. Whatever evil effect the seemingly premature movement might have on a general revolution was none of my funeral. I was told to rescue Gonzales, and I had done it. I was told to aid Mrs. Marchmont; and here she was, in the arms of her husband. Sauve que peut was to be the watchword now, and I gave it. Already the news seemed to have spread through the town, and whether troops were mustering, or citizens rising, made no difference. The first thing for me and my dozen [illegible] to place Gonzales and the Marchmonts in safety. Domingo and his braves were welcome to go along, or carry on the war to their own tastes. I brought them all to their senses.

"This is no place to linger. General Gonzales, your safety has been entrusted to me until I can place you in the hands of Mariano, or start you fairly on the road to join him. Those who choose may travel the same journey, but all must understand it is to be undertaken at once. There has been a concentration of troops begun in this neighborhood against which it would be impossible to stand unless an army could be raised and equipped. If Don Domingo thinks it best to make the effort he may indeed hold out until Mariano arrives; but I suspect the time of the General will be pretty well occupied with the capital for some weeks to come, and meantime I have doubts of what would happen to our cause. I am about to start; make up your minds quickly who is to go with me"

"All," answered Domingo, gloomily. "With fifty men I cannot hold Quezaltepec; if your heroes remained they would only be slaughtered with us."

"Then there is little time to lose. Come!"

We gathered our men and formed in the patio. From the town arose more clamor, and the sounds of marching. Behold you, the whole country was alive, and a regiment of irregular troops which had been encamped on the other side was marching to cut off our retreat. If we wanted to win our way back to the southern border, and Mariano, we had to cut our way through a thousand men, who were all awoke, and reinforced with a piece or two of light artillery.

It was Joaquin who brought the news—Joaquin, whom I had not seen again until now.

I understood well enough. Ramon had given our plan for retreat, and the enemy thought it better to choose its own position than to strike us like caged wolves, where we would strike the hardest. A word to Domingo and on the instant the plan of our compaign was changed. In a compact body we marched out of the patio and sullenly turned our faces northward.

"If they think this is a rout let them follow," said Domingo, grimly. "More likely they will deem it a feint, and wait until morning before they move a step. By that time, if they catch us this side the Mexican border we deserve to fall, shot in the back. For myself, I am not sure but that it would be the better to make such stand as I can at my estanchia, and run the risks. So Gonzales was in Mexico, ready to lead it would not be long before Mariano came this way. My own is lost anyway, yet there might be some fragments of a remnant saved."

I knew how he felt well enough, and it was hardly for me to advise. If he wanted to try his fortunes at partisan warfare he was welcome to the opportunity, and I would not dissuade him. If he could not save his own he might at least have some revenge for it; though I doubted if Mariano would see Quezaltepec soon. The chance of Gonzales to keep in the field and out of the clutches of Baridos lay in a diversion to the south, which might call off the troops, regular and irregular, I could see were concentrating here. So I would have told him had he not taken the bit in his own teeth.

"It is not my part to desert thee when thou hast risked so much, even though Mariano be calling me to the south. Nor yet is it right to throw away my life in a vain fight. For this night we will turn aside to my estanchia, and of the men of the usurper show themselves give them what fight we can. On the morrow we will look the ground over, and hold the fort or pull foot at it seems best. It may be more men will rally to us than we think can rise at such short notice, and I confess a yearning for an early blow at the tyrant. How is it with thee, General O'Rourke?

I believed I had already aired my opinions pretty thoroughly, and I think it was that "General" which did the business. At this rate I might be a dictator in another week; and though I had never hinted a word to Mrs. Marchmont which her husband and the rest of the world might not have heard, I cannot say I was anxious to travel in their company if their safety could otherwise be provided for. How to do the latter was the question on such sudden rearrangement

While I hesitated—as I had not yet done in my military decisions—Marchmont came to my aid.

"I must have some little breathing spell before flight, even at a risk, and I vote for the proposition. If, when morning [illegible], I can have a safe guide, and a well [illegible] [illegible] or two, I and mine will go on, and our friend O'Rourke can do as he may elect. He [illegible] [illegible]vely pledged himself to my wife's cause, and I suspect he would be gone, more for our sakes than on account of the orders of Mariano. I know not exactly how grateful I should be to him; but from what I have heard, without a doubt the debt is not one easily paid. I would not [illegible] advancement."

[illegible] I [illegible]ed gaily, and we [illegible]ed from our course. I had not yet de[illegible] but something within me, not alto[illegible] ambition, led me to present acqu[illegible]

We had not come far, to be sure, but to this time there were no signs of pursuit. From the direction of the city the building lay on rising ground, and they were next thing to a fortress. It might not be hard to defend in case of attack; and I was very certain we would not be caught napping What I had seen of Gonzales had pleased me very well, and I had veered around to the opinion that I might be induced to follow his fortunes, for a time at least.

All seemed quiet as we approached the buildings, yet I was not in a mood to trust appearances. We had been followed—no. But if they had been sending here and there to seize such men as Ramon might have spoken of, what more likely than that a squad had been sent out quietly to apprehend Domingo, and these would take possession and tarry till he came—not knowing of what had happened nearer to headquarters.

Thinking of this, I sent four men ahead, to make sure there were no unwelcome visitors waiting to receive us. They knew their business, and I did not think it worth while to give them particular orders.

They galloped on gaily enough, and I thought little more of them, until, in a moment or two, I heard several pistol shots and a shout from one of my cavaliers. Following that were other shots, of heavier guns, and the vicious roar of perhaps a score of men. There was hot work ahead, and had there been time I could have reproached myself for the careless way I had sent my first four into it. I drew my sword and neck and neck with Jussac and the eight rushed to the rescue.

We were not an instant too soon. My four had ridden to the very door, and were cutting and slashing, with a mob around them. Two were wounded—they knew not how badly—but from the clatter and clangor kept up one might have thought a battalion was at work. In the doorway in front of which was waged the warfare stood a man, who, by the light he held above his head, I recognized as Marcus Whetstone. He looked out eagerly on the scene; yet, with his other hand clutching her wrist, and the arm around her waist, he held a woman.

The sight was enough. I had him before me again, and this time he should not get away. And then he swung the lamp around so the beams fell full upon the face of his burden.

Good Lord! It was either Mrs. Marchmont or her double.

The continuation of this very interesting story will be presented in the Ledger of next week. Every subscriber is entitled to our free cameras and patterns as advertised on pages thirteen and fifteen.

◆

$50.00 California and Return. Personally Conducted

Special trains from Chicago to San Francisco without change, via the Chicago, Union Pacific and North-Western Line, leave Chicago August 18th and August 25th. Itinerary includes stopovers at Denver, Colorado Springs and Salt Lake City. Low [illegible] choice of routes returning. Tickets [illegible] August 15th to Sept. 10th. [illegible] [illegible]ins daily over the only double [illegible]y between Chicago and the Missouri River, and via the most direct route across the American continent. Overland Limited, solid through train e[illegible] day in the y[illegible] [illegible] route. Low rates [illegible] for itineraries of special trains and full information to W. B. Kniskern, P. T. M., Chicago.

◆

Dirt and Character.

It is from a recollection of his own afflictions as a child that a college professor makes a plea for dirt, says the Philadelphia Record. Children, he avers, are tortured by the madness of mothers. They are not only scrubbed with cruel frequency, but are restrained from wholesome play by the th[illegible] of punishment for soiled clothes. Nature, he maintains, has had a good purpo[illegible] implanting in every normal child a fond[illegible] dirt, and the constant efforts to [illegible] influence [illegible] it a grave invasion of the rights of childhood to in[illegible]t that the human young, [illegible] in a state of barbarism, should look [illegible]s on parade. "The laws [illegible] ture," he d[illegible] violated with immunity"; children who have the possibilities of a fine manhood are p[illegible]verted into vain and finical peacocks by [illegible] diseased desire of mothers for unnatural [illegible]

That this desire for excessive clean[illegible] is in truth pathological is affirmed by [illegible] medical writer in the London Lancet. He describes it as a hatred or fear for dirt, and has no doubt that it is an infectious germ disorder. The woman whose highest ambition is to be regarded as the best housekeeper; who makes all enjoyment of the home impossible by her eternal vigilance in the matter of dust; whose mind seems incapable of entertaining any other idea than that of absolute cleanliness, is obviously afflicted with this malady, which is called mysophobia. That the disease is extending is beyond doubt. What has been called the force of example is in fact the effect of contagion. It is chiefly because of the consequences to the children that the subject is considered worthy of attention, but there is little hope that any appeals to mother love will be effective.

◆

Ladies, Preserve Your Youthful Appearance.

Madame Mignette's Beauty Cream and Skin Food removes every defect, spot, freckle, pimple, blemish or wrinkle, leaving the skin soft, clear and smooth. It is perfectly harmless and will not injure the most delicate skin. It preserves and brings back the youthful glow to the fact and ruddiness to the cheeks, preserving it in this condition until extreme old age. This preparation has been used for years and hundreds are now using it and are more than delighted with the results.

Send ten (10) cents for formula which you can have filled at any drug store at a very small cost. Do not delay, but write at once. Box 491, Blairsville, Pa.

◆

Many a man takes a joke for the purpose of working it off as one of his own.

Circus Women Model Wives.

"Of all the women engaged in public employment there are none who are better known in a public manner by the great masses of people living in a city and country than circus women. And there is no class of women in public employment who are so little known to the general public in a private manner. There are no women who are so little understood, whose real character is so little discussed from a correct standpoint.

The speaker was a man connected in an extensive capacity with one of the largest shows in the world, and whose experience in the amusement field has been sufficiently diversified to make him an authority.

"To begin with, they are comparatively few in number. So seldom are they enlisted from the general public that it might well be said that they must literally be born to the business. At least nine out of every ten circus women have circus parents. The remaining one marries into the business, or gets into it through a brother, sister or some other relative. No manager of a first-class circus will engage a female performer in any capacity unless she is accompanied by some male relative. The reasons for this are many, and obvious to any one who will give the subject a moment's consideration. This rule is so general that exceptions to it are rare.

"Dissipation is an impossibility among circus women and is seldom indulged in by [illegible], performers or executive officers. Managers enforce the most stringent rules against dissipation in its every form, and accept no excuses. The first offense brings a heavy fine as a penalty, and instant dismissal invariably follows a second violation. The nature of their work makes it impossible to dissipate.

"Circus women are most devoted wives and mothers, who take life seriously and soberly. I believe that there is no other class of women in any sort of employment where they come in contact with the public which supplies so little food for scandal.

"Their home life in winter is pleasant and agreeable. Some of them, but not many, work in the theaters in the winter time. It is a most curious fact that few of them care to live in the large cities, but make their homes on farms or in small towns. There they have their small circles of friends and relatives and pass the time away in the usual social functions and household affairs, many of them preparing their wardrobes for the coming season on the road. Few of them ever become indigent or dependent upon their families or the public authorities

"They, of all women in the world, most truly appreciate and enjoy the comforts and blessings of a home after being compelled to be away for six months—in a strange town and [illegible] on a circus car every night."—Chicago Tribune.

◆

A Lion.

We think it would be an excellent thing if all children were as sensitive to praise and blame as the dog in the following story. And if Lion felt so much mortification over coming into the parlor with muddy feet, cannot our boys be a little more careful than he was even?

A Newfoundland dog owned by a New Orleans lady gave an entertaining illustration of the fact that in some ways dogs comprehend what is said to them.

[illegible] called on his mistress, and during the visit Lion came in, rather shyly, lay down on the parlor carpet and went to sleep. The conversation ran on, and the [illegible]

"What a handsome Newfoundland dog you have."

Lion opened one eye

"Yes," said the mistress, "he is a very good dog, and takes excellent care of the children." Lion opened the other eye and waved his tail complacently to and fro on the carpet. "When the baby goes out he always goes with her and I feel sure that no harm can come to her," his mistress continued. Lion's tail thumped up and down violently on the carpet. "And he is so gentle to them all, and such a playmate and companion to them, that we would not take $1,000 for him." Lion's tail now went up and down, to and fro, and round and round with great, undisguised glee. "But," said the mistress, "Lion has one serious fault." Total subsidence of Lion's tail, together with the appearance of an expression of great concern on his face. "He will come in here with his dirty feet and lie down on the carpet when I have told him time and again that he mustn't do it."

At this point Lion would doubtless have remonstrated if he could; but, being speechless, he arose with an air of the utmost dejection and humiliation and slunk out of the room, with his lately exuberant tail totally crestfallen.

◆

Beard Did It.

A recent graduate of one of the great universities secured a place with a well-known firm at a modest salary. He fulfilled all his duties satisfactorily, but there seemed to be something lacking. Business callers did not seem to take him seriously, and one would occasionally inquire:

"Say, bub, where's the boss?"

The graduate finally decided to raise a beard. At the end of a week his employer came to him and said

"It's a rather delicate subject, but I'm glad that you have realized that it is your youthful appearance that has been keeping you back. You will take charge of the shipping department tomorrow."

"And some people say that appearances count for nothing," remarked the graduate. "It took me four years to get a college education, and in four weeks I'll have a beard. I made $10 a week on the strength of the education, and got promoted the first week on the strength of the beard."

◆

Don't think for a minute that any man is interested in your troubles—unless he is a lawyer.

BOYS AND GIRLS
CORNER

The Adventures of Tom Dayton;

OR

The Mystery of Dark Hollow.

By Will Lisenbee.

[Copyright by W. D. Boyce Co.]

Begun in No. 31, July 30. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER X.

A startled cry came from Tom as he felt the hand close in a vise-like grip about his ankle, but he was held tightly despite his efforts to free himself.

In his efforts to get free Tom slipped over the edge of the sloping path, and the next instant the burly form of a man grappled with him and the two went down together.

The stranger, a red-faced, fiery-bearded man of forty, was a veritable giant, and Tom was but a child in his hands.

Having dragged the youth to the earth he held him there, gazing into his face and panting for breath.

"Py shemminy, you vos a fine oudfit!" he panted, speaking with a strong German accent. "Ven some poy tries to valk on Peter Funk he vas oudt of his headt!"

"What do you mean by this outrageous conduct?" demanded Tom. "Are you crazy?"

"Vos I some crazytick? Nodt mudch. If I lay down and let somepody valk on me, den I vos in der madt house in fifdeen minutes."

"I didn't intend to walk on you," said Tom, believing the man was either drunk or half witted. "I did not see you till I struck my foot against your arm."

"Dot vos some accident, vos it?" asked the German.

"Certainly. I didn't see you till you grabbed me."

"Den I vos some fool. I t'ought you vos try to valk on me, and ven somepody valks on Peter Funk, eferypody hadt petter look oudt—I tol you dot."

He got up and allowed Tom to rise.

Then he seated himself on a rock, lighted his pipe and began to smoke.

"It isn't very pleasant to be mussed up in this manner," remarked Tom, brushing the dirt from his clothing. "You ought to have known that I did not intend to walk over you."

"I vos asleep," said the German, "and ven I vos wake up somepody is valking all ofer me. I vos madt and ven I vos madt I vos oudt of my headt. Mapy you vos excuse me?"

"Oh, certainly," said Tom; "and I'm willing to apologize for running over you."

"Dot vos all right," replied the stranger, holding out his hand. "You vos a goot poy."

"Thank you," replied Tom, taking the extended hand. "It was only a misunderstanding. I hope we shall be friends."

"You pet your lifer I vos a frient efery time ven people vos all right, and you vos dot every time."

Tom was amused at the stranger's comical speech, and it was all he could do to keep from laughing in his face. But it mystified Tom to understand what the burly Mr. Funk—for such seemed to be the man's name—was doing in that secluded nook.

"My name is Funk," went on the German. "Peter Funk. Vhat vos your name?"

"Tom Dayton," replied our hero. "Do you live in this locality?"

"Nodt mudch," replied Mr. Funk. "If I lif in such a place like dot I vos oudt of my headt."

Tom laughed.

"It isn't a very pleasant place for one to live in," he said. "Are you stopping for a while in the locality?"

The German puffed at his pipe for some moments before he spoke.

"I vos here on peesness," he said. "I vos vone day dot place and dis place der next. I trafel eferyvere."

His words gave no clue as to what his business was there or where he lived. His reticence puzzled Tom. He was no tramp; that was plain to be seen. He was well dressed, and there was a look of honest good nature in his face that precluded any suspicion that he was a disreputable character.

"How long haf you lif in dis place?" he asked.

"I came to Rockville yesterday," replied Tom.

"Den you don't know der peoples dot lif apout here?"

"No, sir."

"Vos der some strangers in der neighborhood?"

"I cannot inform you."

The German was silent for some moments He puffed at his pipe, keeping his gaze fixed searchingly on Tom.

"You dink dot I treat you prety rough shust now?" he asked.

"Well, you might have handled me with a little more care," smiled Tom.

"Let me tell you someding. If I tol you vhy I do dot, I know you vos some sensiple poy and you say nodding."

"Certainly not, so long as it is no affair of mine."

"Dot vos goot. Den listen to vhat I say. Ven you valk on me I dink dot it vos Plack Karl!"

"Black Karl? Who is he?"

"Den you nefer hear of Plack Karl?"

"Not that I can remember."

"He vos a ropper—a roat-agent."

"Is that possible! I hope I don't look anything like a robber?"

"Nodt mudch. Ven I get a look at you I see dot you vos no ropper."

"Does this Black Karl of whom you speak infest this part of the country?"

"Vhat is dot?"

"Do you think Black Karl is in this locality?"

"Dot is what I vos here to find oudt. I vos on der trail of Plack Karl, and ven I find him, py shemminy, he'd petter look oudt!"

"I should think so if you got hold of him," said Tom.

"You pet your sweet life if I find dot ropper I knock de lifer oudt of him before somepody can say 'Shack Ropinsin'!"

"I never heard of any robber by the name of Black Karl being in this part of the country," said Tom. "Where has he been operating?"

"Vhat is dot?"

"Where has he been doing his robbing?"

"Aroundt Gulch City."

"Where is Gulch City?"

"Dot vos in Colorato."

"Oh, in Colorado! Then how do you come to be looking for him in this State?"

"I vos on his trail and track him dis vay. If he aindt hiding somevere aroundt dis neck of wods, den Peter Funk vos make der mistake of his life."

"I hope you will find him."

"Oh, I do dot all right. If I don't, somepody say I vos oudt of my headt! Vell, I reckon I vill pe valking on. I vos glat I meet you. If you see dot Plack Karl loafing aroundt shust you send vord to Peter Funk at Rockville, and someding heppens perty quick."

"All right; I'll keep a lookout for him."

The German got up, stretched himself and held out his hand.

"Good-py," he said. "I hope I see you ven you come to Rockville."

"Good-by," responded Tom. "I shall probably see you when I come to town."

"Keep a sharp lookoudt for dot ropper."

"I'll try to."

The German relighted his pipe, shuffled off down the path and was lost to sight.

Tom stood watching him till he disappeared.

"I wonder what the fellow is up to," he mused. "Can it be that he is really in search of a robber, or is it some game he is playing?"

CHAPTER XI.

When Tom returned to the house he found his uncle sitting on the porch, a pair of crutches lying by him.

"I like to get out in the air as much as I can," he said. "You have been taking a stroll about the place, I see. What do you think of it?"

"I can't say that it has a very inviting appearance," replied Tom. "It has not been kept in very good repair."

"That's a fact. I have taken no interest in cultivating it for some time, and Zeke is so infernally lazy that I can get him to do nothing in the way of gardening. I left him here to take care of the place and he don't seem to have done anything in my absence but sleep and fish."

"Why don't you discharge him and get some one who will keep the place in better order?"

"I don't know. In fact, I have given the matter little thought. Zeke is a fine cook, and I find him a most useful adjunct to my household. I am not a farmer, and have lived here merely because it has furnished me a quiet place to live in, where I can get away from the scenes of traffic and hurry and the feverish haste to get rich. I may take a notion some time to have the place repaired and properly cultivated."

"It might be made an attractive place," said Tom.

"You are right. The house needs some repairs, too, but I may never have it done. It takes a great deal of money to fix up a place like this when once it gets run down. Matters might have been different, but I met with a heavy loss recently, and in a very strange way, by which I am out ten thousand dollars."

"How did it happen?" asked Tom.

"In a very curious way, as you will admit when I explain. I have never had much faith in banks, and it has been my custom to keep my money concealed in the house. I did not use a safe or strong box, as these would only advertise the value of their contents and invite robbery. Finally I hid the box in a place that did not satisfy me. I got to thinking of it in the night. I got up and took it and hid it in another place. I was not satisfied even then, and I was troubled in my sleep over it. The next morning I went to remove it to another place, but it was gone!"

"Some one had stolen it?" asked Tom.

"That was not at all likely. The doors were all locked, and the windows fastened securely when I went to bed, and they were the same when I got up. Then, had a thief gained entrance to the house he could not have found the box in a whole night's hunt, in all probability."

"Then what became of it?"

"That is what puzzles me."

"It is very strange, I must admit," remarked Tom in perplexity. "And you have never found it?"

"No; but I have a theory."

"What is it?"

"That I got up and hid the box again while in a state of somnambulism."

"Is that possible?" cried Tom. "Are you in the habit of walking in your sleep?"

"I was in my youth, but it has rarely happened to me since I was grown."

"Was any one in the house with you at the time of the loss?"

"No one but Zeke."

"You do not suspect him?"

"He is too stupid and lazy to exert himself to do anything of the kind, and then I have always found him perfectly honest."

"You have searched for the box, of course?"

"Yes; I have ransacked the place, but to no purpose."

"That is a very strange affair. What caused you to suspect that you had hidden the box while in a state of somnambulism?"

"Because I have reasons to believe that I walked in my sleep that night. There had been some water spilled in the kitchen that evening, and the next morning there were barefoot tracks on the floor near it and on the threshold of my bedroom door. The tracks I could recognize as my own. I had walked through the pool of water in the kitchen, it seems, and then as I passed across the dusty floor the prints of my feet could be plainly seen. That is all the proof I have, but it was sufficient to convince me that I had been walking in my sleep."

"Well, that is the strangest thing I ever heard of," declared Tom. "And just to think what you have lost! If I were in your place I think I should be hunting day and night till I found the box. Do you think it possible that you would have destroyed it?"

"I do not think so."

"Have you searched for it outside of the house?"

"No."

"Might not you have left the house and hidden the box somewhere outside?"

"By George! that might be. I never thought of looking for it excepting in the house, but now that I come to think of it, I might have unlocked the door, went out and hidden the box and locked the door and left the keys in their place on returning. Of course all this looks improbable, but it is worth considering."

"So it seems to me," agreed Tom. "The box must surely be hidden about the house or very near it, and it ought to be found if a systematic search were made."

"You are right; but owing to my having an attack of the rheumatism I am not able to go on with the search."

"I might assist you."

"That is just what I wished to speak to you about. I should like for you to try your luck searching for the missing box. You know how I am situated here. I have no one with me but Zeke, and he is not the sort of person to trust in a matter of this kind. And you must understand that I must keep the whole affair a secret. It would never do to let it get out that ten thousand dollars were lying loose somewhere about the place. It would attract the curious from all about the country, and possibly thieves as well."

"I understand. It would not do to let the story of the lost box get abroad. Have you searched pretty thoroughly through the house?"

"I think I have, yet it is hard to tell when one has made a thorough search. It seems to me that I have searched everywhere about the house that the box could possibly be concealed, but as I am convinced that the box is here, there are places I must have overlooked. I have been able to do nothing for several days, but if the weather stays hot and dry I shall be much better in a day or two. Then I want us to go at the work together."

"All right. Whenever you are ready. How long has the box been lost?"

"About two weeks."

"You have not been away from the place during that time?"

"No."

"And no stranger has been prowling about the place?"

"Not that I know of. In fact, this is an out-of-the-way place, and no one bothers us—not even a tramp, and I am quite sure the box is safe enough. All we have to do is to find it."

"I hope so," replied Tom.

CHAPTER XII.

After Tom had eaten his dinner he was quite ready to agree with his uncle in re-

I CURE FITS

When I say I cure I do not mean merely to stop them for a time, and then have them return again. I mean a radical cure. I have made the disease of FITS, EPILEPSY or FALLING SICKNESS a life-long study. I warrant my remedy to cure the worst cases. Because others have failed is no reason for not now receiving a cure. Send at once for a treatise and a Free Bottle of my infallible remedy. Give Express and Post Office.

PROF. W. H. PEEKE, F. D., 4 CEDAR ST., N.Y.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

RHEUMATISM cured at home. Give particulars and receive opinion free. Address J. A. Welsch, M. D., Farber, Mo

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

TAPE-WORM EXPELLED WITH HEAD GUARANTEED BOOK FREE. BYRON FIELD & CO. 182 STATE STREET CHICAGO, ILL.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

"**FROM THE BALL ROOM TO HELL**" Very popular book; 25 cents postpaid; agents wanted. Henry Bros., Chicago.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

ASTHMA WILL SEND A RECEIPT FOR $1.00 that will surely cure, or money refunded. Write today. Address F. K. Woodford, Trowbridge, Pa

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

GUITAR Violin, Mandolin, **BANJO** Self-taught, Without Notes by Figure Music. Illus. Pamphlet FREE. E. C. Howe, 1755 Masonic Tem. Chicago, Ill.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

WHISKEY HOW TO MAKE FINE OLD WHISKEY for less than 25 CENTS A GALLON by mixing a few drugs. Lager Beer 5c a gallon. No still or other machinery needed. These recipes have raised many a poor man to fame & fortune. Full Particulars FREE. N D Lewis & Co., 510 Jackson St., Chicago.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

LADIES Our catalogue explains how we teach hair dressing, manicuring, facial treatment, chiropody [illegible] electrolysis quickly. Mailed free. Write nearest branch. Moler System of Colleges, Chicago, Ill., St. Louis, Mo., Cincinnati, Ohio, New Orleans La., or Omaha, Nebr

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

ROYALTY PAID —ON— **SONG-POEMS** and Musical Compositions. We arrange and popularize. PIONEER PUB CO., 6 6 Baltimore Bldg., CHICAGO, - - ILL.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

GINSENG $25,000.00 made from half acre. Easily grown in Garden or Farm Roots and seeds for sale. Send 4c. for postage and get booklet C. O., telling all about it. McDOWELL GINSENG GARDEN, JOPLIN, MO.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

FREE SAMPLE OF CROWN SKIN SALVE the greatest known remedy, for two cent stamp. It cures Eczema, Tetter, Salt Rheum, Granulated Eyelids Piles, etc. Guaranteed. Grace Medical Co., Dept. B, Des Moines, Iowa

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

FORTUNE FREE FOR ONE DIME or Stamps, and [illegible] I send TAGARA'S GREAT FORMULAS [illegible] keep [illegible] positively fresh for [illegible] GUARANTEED [illegible] Address Universal Supply Co., Dept. B.A., Indianapolis, Ind

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

MENDING TISSUE

The WONDER of the Age. No sewing or darning. Repairs clothing, silk, satin, cotton goods, ribbons, fabrics of all kinds, kid gloves, mackintoshes, umbrellas, parasols, stockings, etc. Package, postpaid, 10 cents; 3 packages, 25 cents. Address Penn Publishing Co., Parnassus, Pa

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

A FARM JOURNAL

That's what "The Earth" is. A paper of interest to every man whose livelihood comes from Mother Earth. Farmers and fruit-growers as well as stock-raisers and dairymen—all are interested. Sample copy on request. Subscription price, 25 cents per year, coin or stamps. Address THE EARTH, 1118 Railway Exchange, Chicago.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

WONDER BOOK

This book contains hundreds of wonderful things such as Fortune-telling, Puzzles, Dreams, Charms, Omens, Lucky Signs, Astrology, Verses, Love Tokens, Physiology, Psychology. It is filled with valuable things. Don't buy fakes. This is the genuine. One book by mail, postpaid, 10 cents, 3 for 25 cts. Address

BLADAN LEJUR, Room 401, Boyce Building, CHICAGO,

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

gard to Zeke's art as a cook. The negro certainly understood his business. Though the bill of fare was limited, everything in it bore witness to Zeke's skill, and not least among these was the plate of channel catfish, cooked to a rich brown.

After dinner Tom and his uncle retired to the library. Mr. Henderson stretched himself on a cot by the open window with a book, and invited Tom to entertain himself by looking over the books.

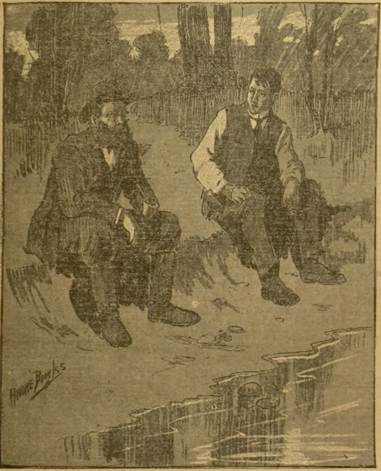
Tom found that there were many interesting works in the library, and among the collection were a number of rare books more than a century old. As he was something of a bookworm he was greatly pleased at the discovery, and much of the gloom of the place was dissipated as he thought of the pleasure he would derive from a perusal of the books.

He spent a large part of the afternoon looking over the dusty volumes, and then after a half hour's conversation with his uncle, he went out for a walk.

Naturally his mind reverted to the treasure box lost by his uncle. He glanced about the place, as if he half expected to see it.

"This is a very strange affair," he mused. "I'd give a good deal to run across the box, but gee whiz!" he continued, as he let his gaze wander over the premises, "if he ever got out of doors to hide it, it is going to be a job to discover where it is. One had almost as well look for a needle in a haystack."

It seemed to him very imprudent that his uncle should keep so large an amount of money about the place. But Dick Henderson was a queer character in some ways, and Tom did not pretend to understand him.



"Py shemminy, you was a fine outfit!"

It was nearly 6 o'clock when Tom returne to the house, and after supper he sat on the porch for an hour or two with his uncle.

As night approached the place had even a more forbidding appearance than it had had during the day, and Tom half wished he had returned to town.

The black shadows lay over the house like a spell as night came down, and the lonesome call of a night bird, the incessant hum of innumerable insects and the sharp rattle of the tree frog all conspired to add to the loneliness of the place.

Tom did not sleep very well that night, and the next morning he told his uncle he would return to town and spend a few days there.

"I have some business to look after," he said, "and when that is attended to I will return and be ready to assist you in making a thorough search for the lost box."

"I shall not be able to do anything for a few days, anyway," replied his uncle, "and you had just as well look after any business of your own while you have time."

Tom did not wait for Ora to come after him, but walked to town. He met Ora as he came into the village. He had just started to drive out to Dark Hollow when he met Tom.

"What is the news?" asked Ora, after they had exchanged greetings. "Did you see your uncle?"

"Yes, and found him to be different in some respects to what I thought. He treated me very nicely and invited me to make his place my home till I get work."

"Well, that's something," remarked Ora. "If he were a miser, as some think, he probably would not have done that much for you. Are you going to stay there?"

"For a short time, but I shall remain in town for a few days, as I have some business to look after."

"Then you will come home with me and stay while you are in town?" said Ora.

"I am very much obliged for your kindness," replied Tom, "but I have planned to stay at the hotel. "I have some business to attend to that may keep me pretty busy."

"Then you must run down and see me when you have time."

"Sure thing," said Tom.

"Will you have your valise taken to the hotel?"

"Yes; and as I see you have it in the buggy, I'll ask you to take it and me both to the hotel."

As they drove up the street Tom saw a familiar figure passing along the sidewalk. It did not require the second glance to tell him who it was. It was the eccentric German, Peter Funk, whom he had met in Dark Hollow the day before.

"Do you know him?" asked Tom, nodding toward the German.

"Never saw him till yesterday," replied Ora. "He is staying at the hotel. Do you know him?"

"His name is Peter Funk," replied Tom, "and I met him yesterday morning near my uncle's place. He is an odd character," and he proceeded to relate the adventure he had had with the stranger.

"What could have been his object in prowling about the place in that manner?" asked Ora.

"He claims to be looking for a robber."

"A robber?"

"That is what he said."

"He doesn't look much like a detective."

"He doesn't act or talk like one, either," replied Tom.

"Do you suppose he's after the fellow that tried to rob you as you came from Tipton?"

"No; he says he is on the trail of a road agent who has been operating in Colorado—Black Karl, he calls him."

"What makes him think the robber is in this locality?"

"He didn't say. He is decidedly queer. I could not make up my mind just what to think of him."

"Probably he is a fraud and is simply playing a game."

"That may be. We shall probably learn more about him if he stays here long."

"He may be a robber himself," suggested Ora.

"I think I shall put the town marshal onto him."

"That would be a good idea. It could not do harm, at any rate."

"And it might do some good in case the fellow has designs on robbing the bank or breaking into the stores. What we need in this place is a detective."

"A detective?"

"Yes; did you know I should like to be a detective?"

"Should you?"

"Sure; and I mean to be one some day."

"I hope you will be successful. Have you ever tried your skill in that direction?"

Ora laughed.

"I guess I had better not say just yet," he replied.

"Why not?"

"Well, I don't want anybody to get the laugh on me. It is always best to be certain that you have found a thing before you grasp it."

"Then you have been doing some detective work?"

"A little," confessed Ora, "but you are not to mention it to a living soul."

"Certainly not, if you desire," replied Tom.

"I'll tell you about it this evening. Here we are at the hotel."

The Commercial Hotel was a two-story brick structure, and was the only establishment of the kind in the place.

Tom got out and took out his valise. As he started to enter the hotel he turned to Ora.

"I shall look for you to come around this afternoon," he said.

In the Ledger issue of next week this thrilling story will be further developed, leading the reader to matters of great interest. Each patron of this paper will do well to read our advertisements on pages thirteen and fifteen, offering free cameras and patterns to all subscribers.

The Rock Widow.

(Continued from page five.)

"Those belonged to Jones," said she. "So did your waistcoat and trousers, though I see your first month's salary has enabled you to procure a better-fitting coat."

Smith turned first red and white, then, with a crushed, despairing air, he turned toward the door.

"God bless you, anyway!" he gasped, with much the same sob that had choked his voice a month before, when he slunk out of that room at midnight, a pardoned thief. "I didn't know you would have recognized me. If you knew all—but no matter——"

"Don't go, Mr. Smith."

He turned again, eagerly, hopefully.

She was standing there, just as she had stood upon that eventful night, only much better dressed and without the revolver; and now her face and eyes were expressive of nothing but a sweet tenderness.

"I have made it my task to find out all about it," said she. "I know more of your past than you think—your honest, hard-striving past up to that hour of temptation, when you sought to steal an outfit of my dead husband—whom you had formerly known—to secure the school situation. But I saved you from crime, didn't I—John? I gave them to you."

"And you still forgive me?"

"Can you ask?"

"And—and can you care for me?"

"You haven't asked me."

The next moment she was in his arms, and, for the first time in her life, the brave, good Rock Widow was drinking love from loyal, manly lips, in which there was no disparity of age or temperament.

"To think that I should marry a burglar at last!" she whispered mischievously, after a little while, when she was sitting very closely by John Smith's side, without troubling herself to move as Jenny peeped in upon the miserable subterfuge that she had heard herself called.

"But you're not in the habit of killing men in this sort of light, I hope?" was the laughing rejoinder.

They were married in a fortnight, and there was only one other amusing incident preceding the wedding, in which the reader will be interested.

"I'll not be able to continue with you on your bridal tour, ma'am," said Jenny, while helping with the bridal things.

"Why not, dear?"

"I've received some offers of marriage," said the little maid, demurely.

"How many?" cried the widow, laughing.

"Only two, ma'am. Both Black and White have sworn that, since they can't have the mistress, the maid's about the next best thing. "White's the richest, but I like Black best."

"Then marry Black, by all means, you little goose, and you shall have a dot of five thousand dollars," cried the Rock Widow, kissing her.

And so she did; and it is not every story that begins with house-breaking and ends with merrymaking.

The Young Doctor Ahead.

Joker—I suffer from cold feet at night.

Dr. Glynn—Is your general health good?

"Perfectly."

"Good appetite?"

"First rate."

"Sleep under blankets?"

"Yes."

"Take plenty of outdoor exercise?"

"Lots."

"Very strange."

"The cold feet I suffer from are my wife's."

"Ah! Get a divorce. Two dollars, please."

$175 AUTOMOBILES

Send 5 cents for our big clearing sale bargain sheet, showing photographs all makes new and slightly used Automobiles, giving description and sacrifice price. Such bargains never before heard of. WRITE TODAY. DON'T DELAY. Graham Cycle Co., 601 Madison St., CHICAGO.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

I PAY SPOT CASH FOR

MILITARY BOUNTY... LAND WARRANTS

issued to soldiers of any war. Also Soldiers' Additional Homestead Rights. Write me at once. FRANK H. REGER, Barth Block, DENVER, COLO

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

MORPHINE Free Trial Treatment

Opium and all drug habits. Painless, permanent Home Cure. Nervous and physical systems fully restored to their normal condition. A full trial treatment alone often cures. Write us in confidence. St. Paul Association, Suite 526, 46 Van Buren Street, CHICAGO.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

WETO GRAPH

The Great Secret Writing System

FOR LOVERS AND OTHERS

Every lover and every one who writes letters should have a Weto Graph. It is a system of secret sign writing for correspondence, etc. If you have a Weto Graph you can preserve recipes, secret memorandum, addresses, or information you do not want anyone to to find out. You can write to your friends on a postal and no one can find out what you have written. Lots of fun to have a Weto Graph. Don't miss it. Send 10 cents and we will send the Weto Graph by mail, with full instructions. Address PENN PUBLISHING CO., PARNASSUS, PA.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

FISH ALWAYS BITE

When you dip your bait in Walton Compound Makes good luck absolutely sure. No fancy outfit needed. Package, enough for a WHOLE SEASON'S GOOD FISHING, sent, postpaid, on receipt of 25 Cents. L. H. GEORGE & CO., 80 Dearborn St., Chicago

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

FREE To introduce Woman's World in your home we make you a present appreciated by every lady. Woman's World has a circulation of 800,000 and is the best high-class illustrated magazine ever published at a popular price. Send only ten cents, our special rate for a five months' trial subscription, and we will send Woman's World for five months, and you will get FREE by return mail TEN beautiful designs and patterns—the centerpiece, photo frame, three large doilies and napkin ring—216 square inches of fine linen stamped with the latest designs as illustrated below; also the fine Battenberg handkerchief, collar, tie-end, etc., shown above—all different—all ready to work—216 square inches more—and all ABSOLUTELY FREE—IN ALL 432 SQUARE INCHES. Send 25 cents and we will send Woman's World one year and all the premiums mentioned above; also 15 yards of fine laces. Address, WOMAN'S WORLD, Dept. L6, CHICAGO.

To Ledger Readers.

Thousands of persons seeing The CHICAGO LEDGER are anxious to receive it regularly and we are making a very liberal offer. The annual subscription to the Weekly CHICAGO LEDGER is $1.00, and everyone who sends in $1.00 within the next 30 days for a year's subscription will receive FREE a KING CAMERA with Complete Outfit for developing and printing pictures, including Silver Paper, Trays, Plates and all necessary Chemicals. We send the CAMERA FREE and prepay charges on it.

Remember you get The LEDGER for a year for $1.00. This is 52 weeks. THE CAMERA IS FREE. This is a magnificent offer, allowing you to get all the fine Continued Stories. The offer is good for 30 days from date of this paper.

The CHICAGO LEDGER is distinctly in the line of Progress. As a purveyor of Romance and Entertaining Literature it has no superior. No other American Story Paper illustrates its matter so profusely or with such care; no other periodical devoted to fiction and humor goes to the expense of using color work generally in its pages, as is done in THE LEDGER. Improvement is manifest in the quality of the stories published, and this improvement will continue. The new form of the LEDGER, sixteen pages instead of eight, makes it convenient to preserve the fascinating novels which appear in its pages, both for yourself and your friends. By sending us $1.00 you get the LEDGER for one year and the KING CAMERA, which is a first-class CAMERA IN ALL RESPECTS. It takes pictures 2 inches by 2 inches in size and is complete and ready for use. Embrace this splendid opportunity at once while the offer is open. Address,

CHICAGO LEDGER, BOYCE BUILDING, CHICAGO

"WHERE JOHNNIE IS."

BY W. D. H.

Ever since John went away
 She would hold to this old map,
"Findin' Johnnie," day by day,
 With it spread out in her lap.
Who was John? He was our boy—
 Soldier boy—so full of fun;
Never cared to have a toy,
 'Cept a sword, or drum, or gun.

So, when he was gone, I say,
 Mother, she would sit and chat
With the map spread out this way
 And the flag pinned "where John's at."
Nights, when I would lock the door
 And go to put out the light,
She'd say: "Let me look once more
 To find where John sleeps tonight.'

By and by she seemed to fail—
 Couldn't think what it might be,
But her cheeks grew waxen pale
 Where the roses use' to be.
But she never suffered so
 That she couldn't "find John's place"—
And her eyes—how they would glow
 When his marches she would trace!

Then, one day, the telegraph
 Came that our boy John was—dead!
I can never tell you half
 What I thought when that I read.
Mebbe it was wrong to do,
 But to mother— Well, I lied:
Told her John was almost through
 With the war, and then she cried.

Late one night I heard her say:
 "Bring the map. I want to see
Where our Johnnie was today."
 Then she looked so strange at me
And picked up the map like this—
 But her eyes looked on, and on,
And she cried out: "There he is!"
 Then dropped back and whispered "John!"

This old map—I keep it here,
 Smudged and tattered up this way,
And that blot? That is a tear
 Markin' where John was one day.
That is where our Johnnie fell,
 Fightin' with those men of his.
Mother knows—I couldn't tell.
 Mother—she's "where Johnnie is."

"CUTTING DOWN".

BY E. T. TAGGARD.

John Furlong sat at his desk, in the office of Lord & Co. Close application to the duties of his position through a long series of years had driven the color from his face, until it resembled in hue the leaves of the open ledger before him. From bending over his desk his once broad shoulders had become rounded, and what was once a splendid physique had become emaciated, until scarcely sufficient flesh remained to hold his bony frame together.

One by one had the clerks who had been his assistants and companions been discharged, and their duties added to his, until, overtaxed, overweighted, and overworked, his brain threatened to succumb to the unceasing strain which was slowly but surely sapping away his very life. Yet no word of complaint or expostulation did he utter, but struggled on with an unwavering will to complete the new tasks which, together, made up the sum of his everyday life.

"We must economize," said Lord & Co. "Labor is a drug on the market, everybody is reducing expenses, and we must cut down—cut down—cut down," and as he threw himself composedly into his luxurious office-chair, the small coins in his capacious pockets seemed to jingle out an echo—"Cut down—cut down—cut down!"

Wages had been cut down until the employes received scarcely enough compensation for their services to purchase a bare existence, and and the working force of Lord & Co. had been reduced until one person was compelled to perform the labor of three. Business was brisk, but day after day would an employe be summoned to the private office of the firm, and his pale face, despairing look and quivering lip, when he emerged therefrom, plainly indicated that he was another victim to the cutting-down process. A summons from the firm to an employe to visit their office was an inevitable death warrant to the victim.

One day John Furlong sat poring over his ledger. His face, if possible, was more haggard than ever and his shoulders seemed rounder than usual. His eyes were deeply sunken, and the expression of pain that occasionally flashed across his marble features denoted that his iron will was endeavoring to keep in subjection the terrible nervous suffering under which he was laboring.

"Mr. Furlong," said the office boy, "Mr. Lord would be pleased to see you in his office."

John Furlong instinctively started. He dropped his pen mechanically, and after a moment's hesitation, during which the blood that flowed through his veins seemed to rush back to his heart, walked deliberately but sadly toward the office in which the senior member of the firm sat composedly.

"Ah, Mr. Furlong! Take a seat, Mr. Furlong—take a seat, sir. Glad to see you! Ah, Mr. Furlong, we find we must cut down—we must reduce. Our expenses are altogether disproportionate to our receipts. Economy is our only safeguard, sir—I might say our only salvation. Boy, order me a carriage at four, sure. We have concluded to dispense with your services, Mr. Furlong, and we will not need you after tonight."

"But, Mr. Lord, after ten years, service in your house, you will not dismiss me in so summary a manner."

"Can't be helped, Mr. Furlong; we must cut down. Everybody is cutting, and we must cut. Can get men to work for less, sir."

"But I am willing to work for less, Mr. Lord."

"Too late, sir—too late. Got a man engaged."

"But, Mr. Lord——"

"Don't detain me, Mr. Furlong. The carriage is waiting, and the club will have a champagne supper at five. We must cut down, sir."

The senior member of Lord & Co., carefully adjusting his high hat on his bald head, entered the carriage, and was driven rapidly away.

"Poor Emily! What will she do now?" exclaimed John Furlong, as he stood like one paralyzed in the private office of Lord & Co. He heard the office door closed, heard the rattle of the wheels made by the departing carriage, and yet he stood alone in the center of the office, an impersonation of the statue of despair.

"Poor Emily!" It was all he said; the tears coursed down his pallid cheeks and fell upon the richly carpeted floor. With an effort he aroused himself, walked to his desk, closed his books, carefully placed them in the safe, and slowly but sadly walked into the street.

His fellow clerks saw him depart. He was a favorite with them all, and with a saddened feeling they watched him until he was lost to sight.

Instinctively he turned toward his home. The people passing through the crowded thoroughfare jostled him as they passed, but he felt them not; the vehicles rattled through the badly paved streets, but he heard not a sound. Like wheat before the scythe, he had been cut down. His thoughts were not of himself, and when from between his quivering lips a sound escaped, only wto words could be heard, "Poor Emily!"

Stopping in front of a four-story tenement in the central portion of the city, he walked into the marble-tiled vestibule, put his nightkey into the lock, opened the door and commenced his weary ascent up four flights of stairs. When he reached the upper landing he was exhausted and almost breathless, yet with the aid of the banisters he reached the door of his apartments, opened it by an effort and staggered into the room.

"John!"

"Emily!"

He had fainted. Exhausted nature could no longer bear the terrible strain. Emily Washburn bent over him. With a woman's instinct she at once perceived the necessity of immediate action, and proceeded to resuscitate him. She bathed his temples and chafed his hands, and her diligence and perseverance were soon rewarded by signs of returning consciousness. "My poor brother," said Emily. "I feared this. You have been sadly overworked; your brain has been tasked beyond endurance. You need rest sadly, and you must have it."

"I shall have all the rest I need now, my dear sister."

"Oh! how kind of Lord & Co.," said Emily.

"Yes, very kind," said John, sarcastically.

"Why, John, what do you mean? Have they reduced your salary again?"

"Reduced my salary again? Oh; if that were all I would not complain. But worse, far worse than that."

"You do not mean to say that you are——"

"Discharged! Yes, Emily, discharged. Turned out by those whom I have faithfully served for years. I do not care for myself, Emily; I can bear the whips and scorns of life without a murmur, but you, my dear sister—what will become of you and your children?"

"Never mind us, John. Cheer up! I can battle with the world. I blame myself for being a charge and care upon you, for what would we have done when my husband died but for your kindness? You have given us a home; you have not only been a brother but a benefactor and savior to us; you gave up your little home and came to us; your hard earnings have been bestowed upon us; you denied us nothing, and now, when the dark day of adversity comes, you are without means yourself. Oh! why did I ever permit you to share your hard-earned bounty with us?"

John Furlong was now reclining upon the sofa. When he thought of his almost penniless condition and his broken health, his courage seemed to forsake him. He looked around him. The children were playing around in happy ignorance of the fate which seemed hovering over their little heads. Were they to be "cut down," too, in the bright days of their infancy? The end of the month was approaching, and the rent had not been entirely accumulated yet. He knew his landlord well. He was inexorable, unfeeling and exacting; and if payment was not promptly made, he would be dispossessed and turned into the streets. The very thought seemed to drive him almost to distraction.

Emily Washburn stood by the window, gazing abstractedly, but almost distracted, into the street below. Her eyes were suffused with tears, and her heaving bosom denoted the terrible struggle that was raging within, and which she was endeavoring with almost superhuman exertions to suppress. It was not the discharge of her brother from the house of Lord & Co., or any fear for her future welfare, or that of her children, that affected her—with a woman's true heroism she had already determined to work for them—but the condition of her brother, his emaciated frame, and the knowledge that his heroic struggles for her and her little family had caused it all.

The wheels of an approaching carriage were heard. As it neared the house the horses' heads were turned in toward the curb, and it stopped in front of John Furlong's house.

"John! John!" cried Emily; "a carriage has stopped in front of our door."

"Perhaps Mr. Lord has relented and sent for me," said John, a faint ray of hope illumining his pale face.

"There is a lady descending from it!" exclaimed Emily.

"A lady!" echoed John, in a tone of disappointment.

"She is approaching the door, and there, John, she has rung our doorbell," as the tinkle of the bell was heard in their hall.

"What shall we do?" said John, vainly endeavoring to sit upright upon the sofa, but sadly failing in the effort.

"What shall we do?" replied Emily. "Why, there's only one thing to do—I shall go down and admit her."

"But surely she must have made a mistake. Our acquaintances are not in the habit of calling upon us in their carriages," said John, smiling sadly.

"Well, John," said Emily, "if she has made a mistake it will be very easy to correct it," saying which she descended to the door to meet the caller whose advent had caused such a stir. In a few minutes she returned.

"There is no mistake about it, John. The lady has called at the right place," said Emily.

"And who does she wish to see?" asked John.

"Mr. John Furlong."

"Me! me! Why, sister, who can it be?"

"Here is her card, brother. She is waiting below."

"John Furlong almost convulsively seized the card and read aloud:

"Miss Florence Packard."

"Miss Florence Packard! I cannot see her, Emily—I cannot see her. Tell her I am indisposed. Offer any excuse you think proper, for I cannot—dare not—see her today."

"I explained your feeble condition to her, John, but instead of withdrawing she seemed to be more anxious to see you than before," said Emily.

"Tell her I will be better tomorrow, and will call upon her. Tell her——"

The door opened gently, and a light footstep glided noiselessly across the carpeted floor toward the sofa on which John Furlong lay. He saw her, and tried to raise himself to a sitting posture.

"Florence!"

"John!"

She effort had exhausted what little strength remained, and he fell back unconscious.

When he revived, Florence Packard sat by his side. Her lace shawl was thrown over the back of a chair, and her dainty little hat occupied another. She kept her little fan busily employed upon his face, and the lifeblood was fast returning into its regular channels. In a spirit of gratitude he extended his hand. She grasped it and held it in hers. For a few minutes not a word was spoken on either side.

"John Furlong," said Florence, "I am not a stranger to the nature of your affection for me. I have known it for years. You love me. You have struggled on and on in the hope of prospering in business and bettering your condition before you made your affections known to me. I have watched you, John Furlong. I am rich, and you are poor. Day after day, with a salary that an unprincipled firm was cutting down, you saw your hopes crushed. Still you labored on with an unfaltering zeal. Today you were discharged—I heard it all. Mr. Lord went to the club, and there boasted of his conduct toward you. In the midst of his hilarity he was seen to reel in his chair and fall. A doctor was summoned, but life had fled. He who had 'cut down' others was in turn 'cut down' by the hand of God. When I heard of your misfortune I hastened here. Surrounded as I am by a host of giddy admirers, I saw at once and read their hearts. They loved me for my money. There is one brave man who loves me for myself alone, and that man is John Furlong."

"Florence! Florence! you have read my heart aright."

"I know it, John. I know also that your love is returned. I have endeavored to disguise the fact from myself; but it is useless. You would not, from a sense of honor, ask me to become your wife—John Furlong; I ask you to become my husband. You are ill—I cannot leave you. Give me the right to remain and care for you—make me your wife."

"Oh, what joy it would be to me!" said John, in the ecstasy of the moment. "Florence Packard the wife of poor John Furlong! Never! Never!"

"Not never, John, but forever," said Florence. "I do not care for what the world says. You are all to me—the world is nothing. You will consent?"

She pressed her claims eloquently and fervently, but still he resisted. He pleaded for delay.

"I will not leave this house save as the wife of John Furlong," said Florence.

He could resist no longer. When he breathed the happy consent, Florence wound her delicate arms around him and kissed the tears from his cheeks. A clergyman was sent for, and before an hour had passed Miss Florence Packard had become Mrs. John Furlong. When his health permitted, they removed from the apartments on the fourth floor to a granite mansion on West End avenue.

The house of Lord & Co. is no longer in existence. The share of the senior member was purchased for our friend, and it is now known as John Furlong & Co.; and when the clerks are summoned to the private office they always emerge with smiling faces. Their salaries have been increased to the old standard, and "cutting down" is unknown in the firm of John Furlong & Co.

Every Lady Read This.

Years ago when I was a sufferer, an old nurse told me of a wonderful cure for Leucorrhea, Displacements, Painful Periods, Uterine and Ovarian troubles. It cured me in one month. It is a simple harmless lotion that can be prepared by any one having the recipe. I will send it Free to every suffering sister who writes to me. I have nothing to sell. This is a case of woman helping women. I send it Free. Address Mrs. A. Hudnut. South Bend, Ind.

The Coming Heroine.

Mr. Jinks—I wish you wouldn't allow our daughter to read those sentimental novels.

Mrs. Jinks—She isn't reading a sentimental novel. The heroine doesn't marry for love.

"Well, the modern society novel, in which the heroine marries for money, is just as bad."

"She isn't reading a society novel."

"Then what is it?"

"It's an advanced novel."

"What's that?"

"The heroine marries for a political pull."

He Had It.

Mrs. Newed—What! You have no income but your salary? You told me you had "money to burn"!

Mr. Newed—Well, I've just paid for a ton of coal, haven't I?

A cigar isn't always what it is puffed up to be. The same may be said of a man.

I Cure Women

OF FEMALE DISEASES AND PILES

I Will Cure You So That You Will Stay Cured—Women No Longer Need Submit to Embarassing Examinations and Big Doctor Bills.

To Show Good Faith and to Prove to You That I Can Cure You I Will Send Free a Package of My Remedy to Every Sufferer.

I hold the secret of a discovery which has never failed to cure women of piles or female weakness. Falling of the womb, painful menstrual periods, leucorrhea, granulation, ulceration, etc., are very readily cured by my treatment.

I now offer this priceless secret to the women of America, knowing that it will always effect a cure, no matter how long you have suffered or how many doctors have failed.

I do not ask any sufferer to take my unsupported word for this, although it is true as gospel. If you will send me your name and address, I will send you a trial package absolutely free, which will show you that you can be cured. The free trial packages alone often are enough to cure. Just sit down and write me for it today.

Mrs. Cora B. Miller. Box No. 25 Kokomo, Ind.

MAGIC DIP NEEDLE For LOCATING GOLD and Silver Ore, Lost or Hidden Treasures. Book and testimonials free. P. & M. AGENCY, [illegible] PENN STREET, READING, PA

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

MOTHERS Enuresine cures Bed-wetting. Sample free. Dr F. E. May, Box 212, - Bloomington, Ill.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

RODS The latest improved; sold under guarantee. Used for locating mines, lost treasures, etc. Cir, two cents. Address: L. A. LOWRY, P.O. Box 1801-09, DENVER, Colo.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

OPIUM and Liquor Habit cured in 10 to 20 days. No pay till cured. Write Dr. J. L. Stephens Co., Dept. B. 2, Lebanon, Ohio.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

BARBERS MAKE EASY MONEY! We teach you the business thoroughly in six weeks. You can make expenses while learning. Barbers make $15.00 to $25.00 weekly. Our FREE Catalog tells all about it. Write to-day. KANSAS CITY BARBER COLLEGE, F.C.Bridgford, Prop., 503 Delaware, Kansas City, Mo.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

YOUNG MEN

AND BOYS

Don't ruin your manhood by secret habits. My new Patented Electric Manhood Protector makes it impossible. A sure habit breaker. Permanently cures lost vitality, varicocele, weakening drains, etc., and restores the organs to their full strength and vigor.

This little invention can be worn undetected. It is a Godsend to men and boys. Indorsed by leading physicians. No drugs, no belt, no C. O. D. fraud. Send for illustrated book, sent free in plain sealed envelope. Strictest confidence observed.

ALLEN K. TODD, 406 16th St., Denver, Colo.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

CURES WEAK MEN FREE

I will send to any sufferer of Lost Manhood, nervous debility, sexual weakness, lost memory, varicocele, night losses, insomnia, lost vitality, neurasthenia, shrunken or undeveloped sexual organs or nervous prostration, a recipe for private use that will quickly restore to natural vigor. It cured me and gave me vim, vigor, vitality and ambition to rise from a hard-working shoemaker to a profession in life. I was once a sufferer from all the nerve-racking symptoms of these diseases, and having been cured it is only natural that I should want to lend a helping hand to my fellow sufferer. Address PROF. GEORGE W. HOWARD, 230 Lincoln Building, Detroit, Mich.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

MEN AND WOMEN

Trade Mark BIG G CURES in 1 to 5 days. Guaranteed not to stricture. Prevents Contagion. THE EVANS CHEMICAL CO. CINCINNATI, O. U. S. A. Price $1.00

CURE YOURSELF!

Big G is a nonpoisonous remedy for Gonorrhœa, Gleet, Spermatorrhœa, Whites, unnatural discharges, or any inflammation, irritation or ulceration of mucous membranes. Non-astringent.

SOLD BY DRUGGISTS

or sent in plain wrapper, by express, prepaid, for $1.00, or 3 bottles, $2.75. Circular sent on request.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

STRICTURE CURE

16,249 Cured Last Year.

Week's Trial FREE

Skeen's Painless Stricture Cure is the only known positive cure for Stricture, Enlarged prostate and Lost Vitality. To prove this will send enough medicine **FREE** to last a full week. The test is at our expense. Write today. Will also send our book upon stricture and testimonials.

D.A. SKEEN CO 120 BELL BLOCK, CINCINNATI, O.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

BLOOD POISON

FOR NINETEEN YEARS

we have made the cure of blood poison a specialty

Primary, Secondary or Tertiary Blood Poison Permanently Cured. You can be treated at home under same guaranty. Capital $500,000. We solicit the most obstinate cases. We have cured the worst cases in 15 to 35 days. If you have taken mercury, iodide potash and still have aches and pains, Mucus Patches in Mouth, Sore Throat, Pimples, Copper-Colored Spots, Ulcers on any part of the body, Hair or Eyebrows falling out, write for proofs of cures. 100-page Book Free.

COOK REMEDY CO.

1730 MASONIC TEMPLE, Chicago, Ill.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

Bits About Korea.

The person of the Korean Emperor is sacred. If a human hand touches him it is sacrilege and the punishment for sacrilege is death. If the Emperor touches a subject he becomes sacred. The Emperor's name must be mentioned only in whispers. His portrait is never painted except after death. Then it is worshiped. Once a foreign ambassador sought to present the Emperor with the portrait of his sovereign. But the minister for foreign affairs regarded the offer as an outrage and the portrait was never accepted. The Emperor's power is boundless; his word is law and he owns everything—land and people—without restriction. A simple wish is a command.

As the Koreans are obliged to dress in white for three years for every case of death and as once three kings died within ten years, by which deaths mourning was imposed on the whole nation, the majority of people chose to dress continually in white in order to avoid the great expense involved by the repeated change in clothing. The women make these garments and every time they have to be washed they are entirely taken to pieces and beaten for hours with a wooden paddle in order to obtain the metallic gloss which is considered particularly beautiful.

State robes for the Korean Emperor are of a rich yellow hue and are embroidered with many cabalistic signs. There are no ushers and no court functionaries at the palace and there is little or no display. The servants wear garments and headdresses of red calico. This court livery is simple to make and cheap to buy.

◆

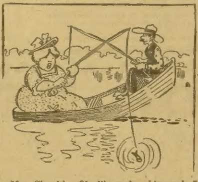
Wanted a Snug One.

Furniture Clerk—What size sofa do you want?

Pretty Girl—One where two's a crowd.

◆

All the Fish's Fault.

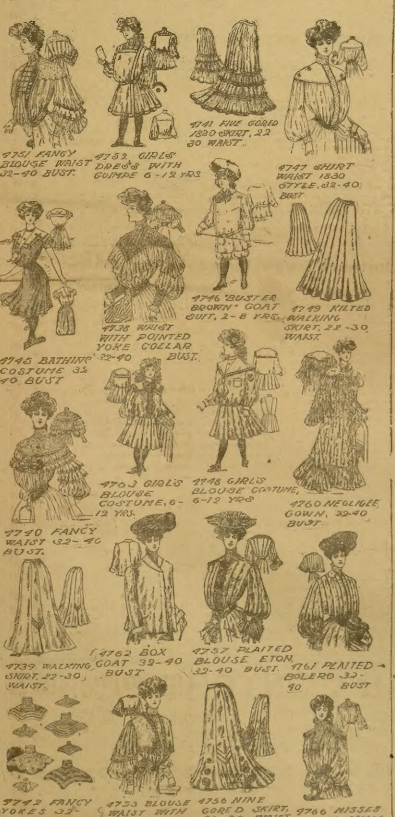


Mrs. Chunkly—Oh, it's such a big one! I just know it will upset the boat!

Beautiful Patterns Free---An Unparalleled Offer.

The patterns shown below are furnished us by one of the best, if not the best, pattern manufacturers in New York. They comprise the very latest styles, and are unequalled for accuracy in fit, simplicity in use, and are most economical of material. They sell from the stores from twenty-five to fifty cents each. Full instructions are printed on every pattern. Three months' subscription to the CHICAGO LEDGER for 25 cents and any TWO of these patterns FREE. Six months' subscription to the CHICAGO LEDGER for 50 cents and FIVE of these patterns FREE. This offer is without equal. If you are wise you will take advantage of it at once.

REMEMBER, to avoid mistakes, you must first give the number of the Pattern wanted—second, do not fail to give bust measure for waist, or waist measure if skirt is desired. Unless you do as here stated we will not know what to send you. Also, do not fail to enclose money. **PATTERN DEPT., CHICAGO LEDGER, CHICAGO, ILL.**


4751 FANCY BLOUSE WAIST 32-40 BUST.
4752 GIRLS' DRESS WITH GUIMPE 6-12 YRS.
4741 FIVE GORED 1830 SKIRT, 22-30 WAIST.
4747 SHIRT WAIST 1830 STYLE, 32-40 BUST
4746 "BUSTER BROWN" COAT SUIT, 2-8 YRS.
4749 KILTED WALKING SKIRT, 22-30 WAIST.
4738 WAIST WITH POINTED YOKE COLLAR 32-40 BUST.
4745 BATHING COSTUME 32-40 BUST
4763 GIRLS' BLOUSE COSTUME, 6-12 YRS.
4748 GIRLS' BLOUSE COSTUME, 6-12 YRS
4760 NEGLIGEE GOWN, 32-40 BUST.
4740 FANCY WAIST 32-46 BUST.
4739 WALKING SKIRT, 22-30 WAIST.
4762 BOX COAT 32-40 BUST
4757 PLAITED BLOUSE ETON, 32-40 BUST.
4761 PLAITED BOLERO 32-40 BUST
4742 FANCY YOKES 32-36-40 BUST.
4753 BLOUSE WAIST WITH BOLERO 32-40 BUST
4756 NINE GORED SKIRT. 22-30 WAIST.
4766 MISSES BLOUSE WAIST. 12-16 YRS

Clever Little Stories.

"Matt" Carpenter, the Wisconsin Senator, was once pleading a case before the Supreme Court. Before Carpenter got half through with his argument the judges had made up their mind that he had no case at all and told him that he might as well cease, as the decision would go against him. He sat down and his opponent, who was very deaf, arose to speak. The Chief Justice said: "I don't think it will be necessary to hear from you." Seeing that he was being addressed, the lawyer turned to Carpenter for aid. "What did the Chief Justice say, Matt?" he whispered. "He said he'd rather give you the case than to listen to you," Carpenter bawled in his ear.

—

"The car was entirely empty, with the exception of one man, and his condition was exactly the reverse," said Miss Myra Kelly; "as I entered, he rose, made me an unsteady but magnificent bow and said: 'Madam pleashe be kind 'nough to asshept thish plashe.' There was nothing else for me to do, so I thanked him and sat down. And for twenty blocks that idiot hung from a strap, swaying in the breeze, with not a soul in the car but ourselves. Occasionally I have been taken for other women, but I never before had any one think that I was a carful."

—

Professor William James of Harvard is very popular with the more intelligent and studious of the undergraduates. When these young men, however, make rash or bold or unbecoming assertions, he does not hesitate to take them down. Not long ago a sophomore aired some rather atheistical views before Professor James. "You," the latter said, "are a free thinker, I perceive. You believe in nothing." "I only believe—haw—what I can understand," the sophomore replied. "It comes to the same thing, I suppose," said Professor James.

◆

Talked Too Much.

Tess—She told me she was going to bleach her hair.

Jess—How indiscreet! She really ought to keep it dark.

WANTED Strong Young Men for **Firemen & Brakemen** on all railroads. Firemen average $65 monthly, and become Engineers, averaging $125. Brakemen average $60, become conductors and average $105. Name position preferred. Send stamp for particulars. RAILWAY ASSOCIATION, Room 15, 227 Monroe St, Brooklyn, N.Y

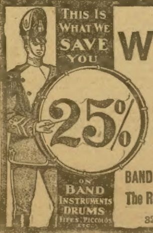
When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger. When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

Wonderful Music Offer

Hiawatha, The Holy City, and 50 other new songs and two pieces of music FREE to each person who answers this advertisement. We are making this most liberal offer to introduce WOMAN'S WORLD, a large, finely illustrated magazine which has already a circulation of 800,000 copies each issue.

WOMAN'S WORLD is edited by able writers who have followed their profession for many years. It contains a lot of interesting reading matter and numerous departments such as are found only in an up-to-date and high-class paper. To introduce our magazine into thousands of homes quickly, we will send it five months on trial **for only 10 cents** and we will send you free and postpaid 52 new songs and two pieces of music as above stated. Send 25 cents and we will send WOMAN'S WORLD **one year** and the songs and music mentioned above, also our Mammoth collection **of 100 songs**, words and music. This is positively the biggest offer ever made by any publisher. We are one of the largest publishing concerns in Chicago, in business over 20 years. If you want a good paper at a low price and a lot of choice music send for either of the above offers. You will be delighted. Address **WOMAN'S WORLD**, Dept. M6 **CHICAGO, ILL.**

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger. When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.


THIS IS WHAT WE SAVE YOU
25%
ON BAND INSTRUMENTS DRUMS FIFES, PICCOLOS ETC.

50 YEARS IN THE LEAD

WURLITZER

DRUMS FIFES PICCOLOS TRUMPETS, BUGLES AND

Band Instruments

Have been used by Leading Bands and Soloists for the past 50 years

BAND CATALOG Containing Money-saving Prices on everything in the Band line FREE

The Rudolph Wurlitzer Co.
Established 1856
320 E. FOURTH ST.
CINCINNATI

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger. When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

Boys' Names Wanted

THE STAR MONTHLY wants names and addresses of bright boys between 12 and 20 years of age. We want to get them interested in our beautiful illustrated magazine of boys' stories, which has a circulation of 150,000 copies monthly. It is 19 years old. It is the boy's companion; it plays baseball and football with him. It coasts, skates, swims, camps, hunts and fishes with him. It goes to school or to work with him. It chats with him about his future, his ambition to get on in the world. It teaches him how to build his head, heart and body. It has departments on athletics, carpentry, games, puzzles, amateur journalism, mechanism, photography, coin, stamp and curio collecting; prize awards in each department. It never has less than 32 large pages, profusely illustrated, and printed on fine polished book paper. It contains fine stories and handsome illustrations and each month awards a large number of valuable prizes to subscribers. Send us plainly written names and addresses of 12 boys you know and enclose 12 two-cent stamps or a silver quarter and we will enter you as a paid subscriber for one year in advance.

The STAR MONTHLY
3 YEARS FOR $1.00

THE STAR MONTHLY, Dept. 46, OAK PARK, ILL.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger. When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger

BOYS WANTED TO SELL THE BLADE AND LEDGER

We want a boy in every town to act as agent. We start you without asking a cent in advance. Fill out the blank below and we will send you a bundle of BLADES AND LEDGERS by mail, also report blanks, instructions, and certificate of agency. In this way you can earn a nice sum each week. No experience necessary. We send full instructions so you can begin at once. Tear out the coupon below and send it in.

W. D. BOYCE CO., Boyce Building, Chicago.

GENTLEMEN: I would like to be your agent. I agree to pay you for all papers I sell, less my commission. I also agree to report every week. Please send me a bundle of papers, report blanks, etc. Yours truly,

Name……………………………………

Street…………………………… *Town*……………………………

Date…………………………… *State*……………………………

THE OSTRICH.

You have probably heard
How that singular bird,
  Whenever a foe is at hand,
Neither scampers away
Nor prepares for a fray,
  But just hides his head in the sand.

If the story is true
It may teach me—and you—
  A bit of a lesson, no doubt,
That a far safer rule
Is to keep the head cool
  And clear, when a foe is about.

When Sea Birds Drink.

Did it ever occur to you to wonder where the sea birds get the water they drink—seagulls and the many other kinds that fly miles and miles out over the ocean? You know they cannot drink the sea water, for that is salt, and sometimes they are too far from land to reach any fresh water streams.

So what do you suppose they do? They follow the rain clouds and catch the drops as they fall! They are able to scent a storm many miles away, and will hurry after it with the most remarkable speed.

But when there are no convenient storms about, the birds sometimes go days, and, perhaps, weeks without any water at all.

SONG OF THE HOOP.

Along with my hoop I run, I run,
  While the trees in the wind do blow,
And oh! it is very good fun, good fun,
  As long as I've breath to go.
When I've none left I stop, I stop,
  (I can't run more than a mile)
And take a good rest on the top, the top,
  Of a neighboring gate or stile.

Willing to Compromise.

Little Margie had been sent to the grocery for a pound of butter. "Well, little girl," said the grocer, "what can I do for you? Be quick, for I'm awful busy."

"P-please, sir," stammered Margie, "my m-muvver sended me for a p-pound of b-butter, but if you is b-busy you can dive me a h-half pound."

An anti-trust bill will be introduced by the Government into the Hungarian Parliament.

IT IS NOW OR NEVER!

Only a few days more and our wonderful contest will close. Have you entered it? If not, read this advertisement carefully and write to us immediately. Never before was the opportunity offered to win $25,000 in gold at a cost of 25c in a contest where your own skill in estimating determines the results. You may not win the first prize but the second prize is $10,000 and the third is $5,000, and even if you fail to get one of these great prizes, there are nearly two thousand smaller prizes, one of which you should surely win if you use a little care and judgment. **This is a contest of skill and brains in making estimates, not a lottery of chances.**

We are making the greatest offer ever made in the history of World's Fairs. It is perfectly fair, perfectly legal, simply a contest of skill and calculation wherein the chances of all are equal—no favoritism, no possibility of collusion or unfairness from any source.

This Contest Closes October 15th,

Six weeks before the Great St. Louis World's Fair closes. Not a certificate will be sold or a penny accepted after October 15th. We are offering

$85,500.00 IN GOLD

to those who estimate nearest to the total paid attendance at the Great St. Louis World's Fair.

The largest prizes ever offered in any contest, and are divided as follows:

To the nearest correct estimate	$25,000.00
To the second nearest correct estimate	10,000.00
To the third nearest correct estimate	5,000.00
To the fourth nearest correct estimate	2,500.00
To the fifth nearest correct estimate	1,500.00
To the sixth nearest correct estimate	1,000.00
To the next 10 nearest correct estimates, $200 each	2,000.00
To the next 20 nearest correct estimates, $100 each	2,000.00
To the next 50 nearest correct estimates, $50 each	2,500.00
To the next 100 nearest correct estimates, $25 each	2,500.00
To the next 200 nearest correct estimates, $10 each	2,000.00
To the next 500 nearest correct estimates, $5 each	2,500.00
To the next 1,000 nearest correct estimates, $1 each	1,000.00
Supplementary prizes	26,000.00
Total	$85,500.00

We give you figures absolutely free, which will assist you to arrive at an average daily paid attendance upon which to base your estimate of the total paid attendance at the entire Fair. We also give you the total paid attendance at other Fairs and the OFFICIAL reports of the paid attendance at the St. Louis Fair up to the very last moment that the figures are obtainable from the Fair management.

The total paid attendance at the Chicago World's Fair was 21,480,141, at the Buffalo Pan-American Exposition 5,306,859 and at the Omaha Exposition 1,778,250.

The paid attendance on April 30th, Opening Day of the St. Louis World's Fair was 125,754, the paid attendance for the month of May was 542,028 and for the month of June 1,382,863, etc., etc.

Write us for further reports. The St. Louis Fair opened April 30th, and will close December 1st, 1904, and you are to estimate the total paid attendance at the entire Fair. Can you do it? You have just as much chance as any one else.

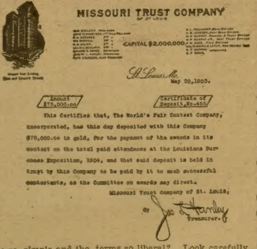
Estimates 25c Each. 5 for $1.00. Lower Rates on Larger Quantities Given Below.

For every estimate you are given a separate engraved and numbered certificate with coupons attached. These certificates are not lots or chances, but are simply certificates of membership showing that you are entitled to make one estimate for each certificate you hold. The more certificates you purchase the more estimates you can make. The surest way to win one of the large prizes is to purchase a large number of certificates and make a great many estimates. These certificates will cost you 25 cents each or 5 for $1.00. Or we will send them to you as low as 12½ cents each if you purchase as many as 40 at one time. An investment of a small amount may mean your independence for life. You have just as much chance as any one else to win a fortune, and it is to your interest and to your family's to take advantage of the opportunity as soon as possible.

You are not placing your orders with an unreliable concern. The money to cover our prizes is on deposit. See statement of one of the largest banks in the United States herewith. In entering a contest, this should be your first consideration. Know that the money to pay you is where you can get it without delay or question as soon as the prizes are awarded. We are incorporated for $200,000.00, and our company is made up of the most influential business men and capitalists.

We cannot touch this prize money. It is held by the Missouri Trust Co. for no other purpose than to pay these prizes as soon as the committee on awards declares the successful contestants. This committee has no interest whatever in the contest, and is made up of prominent business men who have agreed to award the prizes, and your estimates are turned over to this committee long before the Fair closes.

Your estimates must reach us by October 15. We will simply sell you the certificates with duplicate coupons attached, and allow you the privilege of filling in your own estimates on the certificates and coupons whenever you are ready, and of sending in the coupons to us on the very last day of the contest if you wish. That is, you do not have to make your estimate NOW, but you can buy your certificates NOW, and hold them yourself up to the last day of the contest, when you will know what the total attendance is up to that date, then fill in your estimates and send the coupons to us just so they are received in our office by not later than October 15, 1904, the date on which the contest closes. The World's Fair opened April 30, 1904, and closes December 1, 1904, showing that the closing date of the contest is at least six weeks prior to the closing date of the Fair, insuring absolute fairness to every participant in the contest.



MISSOURI TRUST COMPANY
OF ST. LOUIS

CAPITAL $2,000,000.

St. Louis Mo.
May 20, 1903.

Amount
$75,000.00

Certificate of
Deposit, No. 456

This Certifies that, The World's Fair Contest Company, incorporated, has this day deposited with this Company $75,000.00 in gold, for the payment of the awards in its contest on the total paid attendance at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, 1904, and that said deposit is held in trust by this Company to be paid by it to such successful contestants, as the Committee on awards may direct.

Missouri Trust Company of St. Louis,
By
Treasurer.

Is not this indeed a wonderful offer? Did you ever hear of a Contest where the conditions were so simple and the terms so liberal? Look carefully over the list of prizes, and you will readily see that if you fail to win the first or second or even the third prize, you still have an opportunity to share in nearly two thousand other handsome prizes, any one of which is worth trying for.

The More COUPONS and CERTIFICATES you hold the greater your opportunities are of securing one or more of these grand prizes.

1 Certificate and Coupon will cost	25 cents
5 Certificates and Coupons will cost	$1.00
12 Certificates and Coupons will cost	2.00
20 Certificates and Coupons will cost	3.00
40 Certificates and Coupons will cost	5.00

The small sum of 25 cents or $1.00 or even $5.00 is of little value in itself. Can you find a better place to invest so small an amount than here, where your own skill and judgment has so much to do with the result and where it may bring you an independent fortune? You will never get this opportunity again and it is the last chance that you will ever have to enter the Contest.

There are thousands of poor people in the world today who can attribute their limited circumstances to one little instance of neglect. This is probably the opportunity of your life. Are you going to let it slip by you? It is not every day that an opportunity to gain $25,000 by the exercise of your own intelligence at a cost of 25 cents is laid at your door. Write today for full particulars. Don't think that "tomorrow will do as well." The habit of putting off till tomorrow grows on one until the day comes when he or she realizes that the opportunity is gone forever, while the more thoughtful neighbor acts promptly and gains the fortune which might as well have been yours. An investment of only a small amount may mean that a fortune is yours.

THE WORLD'S FAIR CONTEST CO.,

7150 Delmar Avenue, · St. Louis, Mo.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.—Bear in mind **That You Hold Your Own Certificates** and Coupons and that you do not have to make your estimates or fill in the Certificates and Coupons and send the coupons to us until the very last day of the Contest if you so desire. Remember also that this is the last chance you will have to buy certificates and coupons. Contestants are distinctly to understand that participation in this prize contest is not confined to subscribers for any one paper, but that the contest is being advertised in a large number of other publications, the subscribers for all of which are privileged to compete and share in the distribution of the prizes offered.

When Writing Mention Chicago Ledger. When Writing Mention Chicago Ledger. When Writing Mention Chicago Ledger. When Writing Mention Chicago Ledger.